THE HISTORY OF TOM JONES, A FOUNDLING.

THE HISTORY OF TOM JONES, FOUNDLING.

BRITISH MUSEUM

THE HISTORY OF TOM JONES, A FOUNDLING.

By HENRY FIELDING, Esq;

— *Mores hominum multorum vidit* —

VOL. IV.

PARIS:

Printed by Fr. Amb. Didot the eldest,

And sold by { J. N. Pissot, and Barrois junior, Quai des Augustins. } Booksellers.

M. DCC. LXXX.

BRITISH MUSEUM

CONTENTS

OF THE

FOURTH VOLUME.

BOOK XIV.

Containing two days.

CHAP. I. *An eſſay to prove that an author will write the better, for having ſome knowledge of the ſubject on which he writes.* Pag. 1

CHAP. II. *Containing letters and other matters which attend amours.* 7

CHAP. III. *Containing various matters.* 15

CHAP. IV. *Which we hope will be very attentively peruſed by young people of both ſexes.* 22

CHAP. V. *A ſhort account of the hiſtory of Mrs. Miller.* 28

CHAP. VI. *Containing a ſcene which we doubt not will affect all our readers.* 34

CHAP. VII. *The interview between Mr. Jones and Mr. Nightingale.* 42

CHAP. VIII. *What paſſed between Jones and old Mr. Nightingale; with the arrival of a perſon not yet mentioned in this hiſtory.* 50

CHAP. IX. *Containing ſtrange matters.* 61

CHAP. X. *A ſhort chapter, which concludes the book.* 66

BOOK XV.

In which the hiſtory advances about two days.

CHAP. I. *Too ſhort to need a preface.* 69

CHAP. II. *In which is opened a very black deſign againſt Sophia.* 71

Chap. III. *A further explanation of the foregoing deſign.* 79

CHAP. IV. *By which it will appear how dangerous an advocate a lady is, when ſhe applies her eloquence to an ill purpoſe.* 85

CHAP. V. *Containing ſome matters which may affect, and others which may ſurpriſe the reader.* 88

CHAP. VI. *By what means the 'ſquire came to diſcover his daughter.* 98

CHAP. VII. *In which various misfortunes befel poor Jones.* 105

CHAP. VIII. *Short and ſweet.* 116

CHAP. IX. *Containing love letters of ſeveral ſorts.* 120

Chap. X. *Conſiſting partly of facts, and partly of obſervations upon them.* 130

Chap. XI. *Containing curious, but not unprecedented matter.* 136

Chap. XII. *A diſcovery made by Partridge.* 140

BOOK XVI.

Containing the ſpace of five days.

Chap. I. *Of Prologues.* 146

Chap. II. *A whimſical adventure which befel the 'ſquire, with the diſtreſſed ſituation of Sophia.* 149

Chap. III. *What happened to Sophia during her confinement.* 160

Chap. IV. *In which Sophia is delivered from her confinement.* 166

Chap. V. *In which Jones receives a letter from Sophia, and goes to a play with Mrs. Miller and Partridge.* 174

Chap. VI. *In which the hiſtory is obliged to go back.* 185

Chap. VII. *In which Mr. Weſtern pays a viſit to his ſiſter, in company with Mr. Bliſil.* 190

Chap. VIII. *Schemes of lady Bellaſton for the ruin of Jones.* 194

CHAP. IX. *In which Jones pays a visit to Mrs. Fitzpatrick.* 200

CHAP. X. *The consequence of the preceding visit.* 207

BOOK XVII.

Containing three days.

CHAP. I. *Containing a portion of introductory writing.* 213

CHAP. II. *The generous and grateful behaviour of Mrs. Miller.* 216

CHAP. III. *The arrival of Mr. Western, with some matters concerning the paternal authority.* 221

CHAP. IV. *An extraordinary scene between Sophia and her aunt.* 233

CHAP. V. *Mrs. Miller and Mr. Nightingale visit Jones in the prison.* 240

CHAP. VI. *In which Mrs. Miller pays a visit to Sophia.* 245

CHAP. VII. *A pathetic scene between Mr. Allworthy and Mrs. Miller.* 251

CHAP. VIII. *Containing various matters.* 255

CHAP. IX. *What happened to Mr. Jones in the prison.* 265

BOOK XVIII.

Containing about six days.

CHAP. I. *A farewell to the reader.* 275

CHAP. II. *Containing a very tragical incident.* 278

CHAP. III. *Allworthy visits old Nightingale; with a strange discovery that he made on that occasion.* 286

CHAP. IV. *Containing two letters in very different stiles.* 293

CHAP. V. *In which the history is continued.* 299

CHAP. VI. *In which the history is further continued.* 308

CHAP. VII. *Continuation of the history.* 314

CHAP. VIII. *Further continuation.* 322

CHAP. IX. *A further continuation.* 335

CHAP. X. *Wherein the history begins to draw towards a conclusion.* 346

CHAP. XI. *The history draws nearer to a conclusion.* 355

CHAP. XII. *Approaching still nearer to the end.* 364

CHAP. XIII. *In which the history is concluded.* 375

THE END.

ERRATA.

Pag. 31, lin. 21, conſtanly, *read* conſtantly. — P. 59, l. 29, with, *r.* will. — P. 196, l. 18, received, it, *r.* received it, — P. 207, l. 7, confined, *r.* confirmed. — P. 226, l. 20, fortune) for, *r.* fortune (for. — P. 255, l. 23, real, *r.* zeal. — P. 300, l. 10, tallhis, *r.* all this.

THE HISTORY OF A FOUNDLING.

BOOK XIV.

Containing two days.

CHAP. I.

An essay to prove that an author will write the better, for having some knowledge of the subject on which he writes.

AS several gentlemen in these times, by the wonderful force of genius only, without the least assistance of learning, perhaps without being well able to read, have made a considerable figure in the republic of letters; the modern critics, I am told, have lately begun to assert, that all kind of learning is entirely useless to a writer; and, indeed, no other than a kind of fetters on the natural sprightliness and activity of the imagination, which is thus weighed down, and prevented from soaring

to thoſe high flights which otherwiſe it would be able to reach.

This doctrine, I am afraid, is, at preſent, carried much too far: for why ſhould writing differ ſo much from all other arts? The nimbleneſs of a dancing-maſter is not at all prejudiced by being taught to move; nor doth any mechanic, I believe, exerciſe his tools the worſe by having learnt to uſe them. For my own part, I cannot conceive that Homer or Virgil would have writ with more fire, if, inſtead of being maſters of all the learning of their times, they had been as ignorant as moſt of the authors of the preſent age. Nor do I believe that all the imagination, fire, and judgment of Pitt, could have produced thoſe orations that have made the ſenate of England in theſe our times a rival in eloquence to Greece and Rome, if he had not been ſo well read in the writings of Demoſthenes and Cicero, as to have transfuſed their whole ſpirit into his ſpeeches, and with their ſpirit, their knowledge too.

I would not here be underſtood to inſiſt on the ſame fund of learning in any of my brethren, as Cicero perſuades us is neceſſary to the compoſition of an orator. On the contrary, very little reading is, I conceive, neceſſary to the poet, leſs to the critic, and the leaſt of all to the politician. For the firſt, perhaps, Byſhe's Art of Poetry, and a few of our modern poets, may ſuffice; for the ſecond,

a moderate heap of plays; and for the laſt, an indifferent collection of political journals.

To ſay the truth, I require no more than that a man ſhould have ſome little knowledge of the ſubject on which he treats, according to the old maxim of law, *Quam quiſque norit artem in eâ ſe exerceat.* With this alone a writer may ſometimes do tolerably well; and indeed without this, all the other learning in the world will ſtand him in little ſtead.

For inſtance, let us ſuppoſe that Homer and Virgil, Ariſtotle and Cicero, Thucydides and Livy, could have met all together, and have clubbed their ſeveral talents to have compoſed a treatiſe on the art of dancing; I believe it will be readily agreed they could not have equalled the excellent treatiſe which Mr. Eſſex hath given us on that ſubject, entitled, The Rudiments of genteel Education. And, indeed, ſhould the excellent Mr. Broughton be prevailed on to ſet fiſt to paper, and to complete the above-ſaid rudiments, by delivering down the true principles of Athletics, I queſtion whether the world will have any cauſe to lament, that none of the great writers, either antient or modern, have ever treated about that noble and uſeful art.

To avoid a multiplicity of examples in ſo plain a caſe, and to come at once to my point, I am apt to conceive, that one reaſon why many Engliſh writers have totally failed in deſcribing the manners of upper

life, may poſſibly be, that in reality they know nothing of it.

This is a knowledge unhappily not in the power of many authors to arrive at. Books will give us a very imperfect idea of it; nor will the ſtage a much better: the fine gentleman formed upon reading the former, will almoſt always turn out a pedant, and he who forms himſelf upon the latter, a coxcomb.

Nor are the characters drawn from theſe models better ſupported. Vanbrugh and Congreve copied nature; but they who copy them draw as unlike the preſent age, as Hogarth would do if he was to paint a rout or a drum in the dreſſes of Titian and of Vandyke. In ſhort, imitation here will not do the buſineſs. The picture muſt be after nature herſelf. A true knowledge of the world is gained only by converſation, and the manners of every rank muſt be ſeen in order to be known.

Now it happens that this higher order of mortals is not to be ſeen, like all the reſt of the human ſpecies, for nothing, in the ſtreets, ſhops, and coffee-houſes: nor are they ſhewn like the upper rank of animals, for ſo much a-piece. In ſhort, this is a ſight to which no perſons are admitted, without one or other of theſe qualifications, viz. either birth or fortune; or what is equivalent to both, the honourable profeſſion of a gameſter. And, very unluckily for the world, perſons ſo qualified very ſeldom care to take upon themſelves the bad trade of writing;

which is generally entered upon by the lower and poorer ſort, as it is a trade which many think requires no kind of ſtock to ſet up with.

Hence thoſe ſtrange monſters in lace and embroidery, in ſilks and brocades, with vaſt wigs and hoops; which, under the name of lords and ladies, ſtrut the ſtage, to the great delight of attorneys and their clerks in the pit, and of the citizens and their apprentices in the galleries; and which are no more to be found in real life, than the centaur, the chimera, or any other creature of mere fiction. But to let my reader into a ſecret, this knowledge of upper life, though very neceſſary for preventing miſtakes, is no very great reſource to a writer, whoſe province is comedy, or that kind of novels, which, like this I am writing, is of the comic claſs.

What Mr. Pope ſays of women, is very applicable to moſt in this ſtation, who are, indeed, ſo entirely made up of form and affectation, that they have no character at all, at leaſt, none which appears. I will venture to ſay the higheſt life is much the dulleſt, and affords very little humour or entertainment. The various callings in lower ſpheres produce the great variety of humourous characters; whereas here, except among the few who are engaged in the purſuit of ambition, and the fewer ſtill who have a reliſh for pleaſure, all is vanity and ſervile imitation. Dreſſing and cards, eating and drinking, bowing and curteſying, make up the buſineſs of their lives.

Some there are, however, of this rank, upon whom paſſion exerciſes its tyranny, and hurries them far beyond the bounds which decorum preſcribes; of theſe, the ladies are as much diſtinguiſhed by their noble intrepidity, and a certain ſuperior contempt of reputation, from the frail ones of meaner degree, as a virtuous woman of quality is, by the elegance and delicacy of her ſentiments, from the honeſt wife of a yeoman or ſhop-keeper. Lady Bellaſton was of this intrepid character; but let not my country readers conclude from her, that this is the general conduct of women of faſhion, or that we mean to repreſent them as ſuch. They might as well ſuppoſe, that every clergyman was repreſented by Thwackum, or every ſoldier by enſign Northerton.

There is not, indeed, a greater error than that which univerſally prevails among the vulgar, who, borrowing their opinion from ſome ignorant ſatyriſts, have affixed the character of lewdneſs to theſe times. On the contrary, I am convinced, there never was leſs of love intrigue carried on among perſons of condition, than now. Our preſent women have been taught by their mothers to fix their thoughts only on ambition and vanity, and to deſpiſe the pleaſures of love as unworthy their regard; and being afterwards, by the care of ſuch mothers, married without having huſbands, they ſeem pretty well confirmed in the juſtneſs of thoſe ſentiments; whence they content themſelves, for the dull

remainder of life, with the purſuit of more innocent, but, I am afraid, more childiſh amuſements, the bare mention of which would ill ſuit with the dignity of this hiſtory. In my humble opinion, the true characteriſtic of the preſent beau monde, is rather folly than vice, and the only epithet which it deſerves, is that of frivolous.

CHAP. II.

Containing letters and other matters which attend amours.

JONES had not long been at home, before he received the following letter.

I was never more ſurpriſed than when I found you was gone. When you left the room, I little imagined you intended to have left the houſe without ſeeing me again. Your behaviour is all of a piece, and convinces me how much I ought to deſpiſe a heart which can doat upon an idiot; though I know not whether I ſhould not admire her cunning more than her ſimplicity: wonderful both! For though ſhe underſtood not a word of what paſſed between us, ſhe yet had the ſkill, the aſſurance, the — what ſhall I call it? to deny to my face, that ſhe knows you, or ever ſaw you before. — Was this a

ſcheme laid between you, and have you been baſe enough to betray me? — O how I deſpiſe her, you, and all the world, but chiefly myſelf! for — I dare not write what I ſhould afterwards run mad to read; but remember, I can deteſt as violently as I have loved.

Jones had but little time given him to reflect on this letter, before a ſecond was brought him from the ſame hand; and this, likewiſe, we ſhall ſet down in the preciſe words.

When you conſider the hurry of ſpirits in which I muſt have writ, you cannot be ſurpriſed at any expreſſions in my former note. — Yet, perhaps, on reflection, they were rather too warm. At leaſt, I would, if poſſible, think all owing to the odious play-houſe, and to the impertinence of a fool, which detained me beyond my appointment. How eaſy is it to think well of thoſe we love! — Perhaps you deſire I ſhould think ſo. I have reſolved to ſee you to-night; ſo come to me immediately.

P. S. I have ordered to be at home to none but yourſelf.

P. S. Mr. Jones will imagine I ſhall aſſiſt him in his defence; for, I believe, he cannot deſire to impoſe on me more than I deſire to impoſe on myſelf.

— *P. S.* Come immediately.

To the men of intrigue I refer the determination, whether the angry or tender letter gave the greateſt uneaſineſs to Jones. Certain it is, he had no violent inclination to pay any more viſits that evening, unleſs to one ſingle perſon. However, he thought his honour engaged, and had not this been motive ſufficient, he would not have ventured to blow the temper of lady Bellaſton into that flame of which he had reaſon to think it ſuſceptible, and of which he feared the conſequence might be a diſcovery to Sophia, which he dreaded. After ſome diſcontented walks, therefore, about the room, he was preparing to depart, when the lady kindly prevented him, not by another letter, but by her own preſence. She entered the room very diſordered in her dreſs, and very diſcompoſed in her looks, and threw herſelf into a chair, where having recovered her breath, ſhe ſaid: — You ſee, Sir, when women have gone one length too far, they will ſtop at none. If any perſon would have ſworn this to me a week ago, I would not have believed it of myſelf. I hope, Madam, ſaid Jones, my charming lady Bellaſton will be as difficult to believe any thing againſt one who is ſo ſenſible of the many obligations ſhe had conferred upon him. Indeed! ſays ſhe, ſenſible of obligations! Did I expect to hear ſuch cold language from Mr. Jones? Pardon me, my dear angel, ſaid he, if after the letters I have received, the terrors of your anger, though I know

not how I have deſerved it — And have I then, ſays ſhe with a ſmile, ſo angry a countenance? — Have I really brought a chiding face with me? — If there be honour in man, ſaid he, I have done nothing to merit your anger. — You remember the appointment you ſent me, — I went in purſuance. — I beſeech you, cried ſhe, do not run through the odious recital. — Anſwer me but one queſtion, and I ſhall be eaſy. — Have you not betrayed my honour to her? — Jones fell upon his knees, and began to utter the moſt violent proteſtations, when Partridge came dancing and capering into the room, like one drunk with joy, crying out; She's found! ſhe's found! — Here, Sir, here, ſhe's here; — Mrs. Honour is upon the ſtairs. Stop her a moment, cries Jones. — Here, Madam, ſtep behind the bed, I have no other room, nor cloſet, nor place on earth, to hide you in: ſure never was ſo damn'd an accident. — D — n'd indeed! ſaid the lady, as ſhe went to her place of concealment; and preſently afterwards in came Mrs. Honour. Hey-day! ſays ſhe, Mr. Jones, what's the matter? — That impudent raſcal, your ſervant, would ſcarce let me come up ſtairs. I hope he hath not the ſame reaſon now to keep me from you, as he had at Upton. — I ſuppoſe you hardly expected to ſee me; but you have certainly bewitched my lady. Poor dear young lady! To be ſure, I loves her as tenderly as if ſhe was my own ſiſter. Lord have mercy upon

you, if you don't make her a good huſband; and to be ſure if you do not, nothing can be bad enough for you. Jones begged her only to whiſper, for that there was a lady dying in the next room. A lady! cries ſhe; ay, I ſuppoſe one of your ladies. — O Mr. Jones, there are too many of them in the world; I believe we are got into the houſe of one, for my lady Bellaſton, I darſt to ſay, is no better than ſhe ſhould be. — Huſh, huſh, cries Jones, every word is over-heard in the next room. I don't care a farthing, cries Honour, I ſpeaks no ſcandal of any one; but to be ſure the ſervants make no ſcruple of ſaying as how her la'ſhip meets men at another place — where the houſe goes under the name of a poor gentlewoman; but her la'ſhip pays the rent, and many's the good thing beſides, they ſay, ſhe hath of her. — Here Jones, after expreſſing the utmoſt uneaſineſs, offered to ſtop her mouth. — Hey-day! why ſure, Mr. Jones, you will let me ſpeak, I ſpeaks no ſcandal, for I only ſays what I heard from others, — and thinks I to myſelf much good may it do the gentlewoman with her riches, if ſhe comes by it in ſuch a wicked manner. To be ſure it is better to be poor and honeſt. The ſervants are villains, cries Jones, and abuſe their lady unjuſtly. — Ay, to be ſure, ſervants are always villains, and ſo my lady ſays, and won't hear a word of it. — No, I am convinced, ſays Jones, my Sophia is above liſtening to ſuch baſe

ſcandal. Nay, I believe, it is no ſcandal neither, cries Honour, for why ſhould ſhe meet men at another houſe? — It can never be for any good: for if ſhe had a lawful deſign of being courted, as to be ſure any lady may lawfully give her company to men upon that account; why, where can be the ſenſe? — I proteſt, cries Jones, I can't hear all this of a lady of ſuch honour, and a relation of Sophia; beſides, you will diſtract the poor lady in the next room. — Let me entreat you to walk with me down ſtairs. — Nay, Sir, if you won't let me ſpeak, I have done. — Here, Sir, is a letter from my young lady, — what would ſome men give to have this? But, Mr. Jones, I think, you are not over and above generous, and yet I have heard ſome ſervants ſay — but I am ſure, you will do me the juſtice to own I never ſaw the colour of your money. Here Jones haſtily took the letter, and preſently after ſlipped five pieces into her hand. He then returned a thouſand thanks to his dear Sophia in a whiſper, and begged her to leave him to read her letter; ſhe preſently departed, not without expreſſing much grateful ſenſe of his generoſity.

Lady Bellaſton now came from behind the curtain. How ſhall I deſcribe her rage? Her tongue was at firſt incapable of utterance; but ſtreams of fire darted from her eyes, and well indeed they might, for her heart was all in a flame. And now, as ſoon as her voice found way, inſtead of expreſſing any

indignation againſt Honour or her own ſervants, ſhe began to attack poor Jones. You ſee, ſaid ſhe, what I have ſacrificed to you, my reputation, my honour, — gone for ever! And what return have I found? Neglected, ſlighted for a country girl, for an idiot. — What neglect, Madam, or what ſlight, cries Jones, have I been guilty of? — Mr. Jones, ſaid ſhe, it is in vain to diſſemble; if you will make me eaſy, you muſt entirely give her up; and as a proof of your intention, ſhew me the letter. — What letter, Madam? ſaid Jones. Nay, ſurely, ſaid ſhe, you cannot have the confidence to deny your having received a letter by the hands of that trollop. And can your ladyſhip, cries he, aſk of me, what I muſt part with my honour before I grant? Have I acted in ſuch a manner by your ladyſhip? Could I be guilty of betraying this poor innocent girl to you, what ſecurity could you have, that I ſhould not act the ſame part by yourſelf? A moment's reflection will, I am ſure, convince you, that a man with whom the ſecrets of a lady are not ſafe, muſt be the moſt contemptible of wretches. Very well, ſaid ſhe, — I need not inſiſt on your becoming this contemptible wretch in your own opinion; for the inſide of the letter could inform me of nothing more than I know already. I ſee the footing you are upon. — Here enſued a long converſation, which the reader, who is not too curious, will thank me for not inſerting at length. It ſhall ſuffice, therefore, to inform him,

that lady Bellaſton grew more and more pacified, and, at length, believed, or affected to believe, his proteſtations, that his meeting with Sophia that evening was merely accidental; and every other matter which the reader already knows, and which as Jones ſet before her in the ſtrongeſt light, it is plain that ſhe had, in reality, no reaſon to be angry with him.

She was not, however, in her heart, perfectly ſatisfied with his refuſal to ſhew her the letter; ſo deaf are we to the cleareſt reaſon, when it argues againſt our prevailing paſſions. She was, indeed, well convinced, that Sophia poſſeſſed the firſt place in Jones's affections; and yet, haughty and amorous as this lady was, ſhe ſubmitted, at laſt, to bear the ſecond place: or, to expreſs it more properly in a legal phraſe, was contented with the poſſeſſion of that of which another woman had the reverſion.

It was at length agreed, that Jones ſhould, for the future, viſit at the houſe; for that Sophia, her maid, and all the ſervants, would place theſe viſits to the account of Sophia; and that ſhe herſelf would be conſidered as the perſon impoſed upon.

This ſcheme was contrived by the lady, and highly reliſhed by Jones, who was indeed glad to have a proſpect of ſeeing his Sophia at any rate; and the lady herſelf was not a little pleaſed with the impoſition on Sophia, which Jones, ſhe thought, could not poſſibly diſcover to her for his own ſake.

The next day was appointed for the firſt viſit, and then, after proper ceremonials, the lady Bellaſton returned home.

CHAP. III.

Containing various matters.

JONES was no ſooner alone, than he eagerly broke open his letter, and read as follows:

Sir, it is impoſſible to expreſs what I have ſuffered ſince you left this houſe; and as I have reaſon to think you intend coming here again, I have ſent Honour, though ſo late at night, as ſhe tells me ſhe knows your lodgings, to prevent you. I charge you, by all the regard you have for me, not to think of viſiting here; for it will certainly be diſcovered; nay, I almoſt doubt from ſome things which have dropt from her ladyſhip, that ſhe is not already without ſome ſuſpicion. Something favourable perhaps may happen; we muſt wait with patience; but I once more entreat you, if you have any concern for my eaſe, do not think of returning hither.

This letter adminiſtered the ſame kind of conſolation to poor Jones, which Job formerly received from his friends. Beſides diſappointing all the hopes which he promiſed to himſelf from

ſeeing Sophia, he was reduced to an unhappy dilemma, with regard to lady Bellaſton; for there are ſome certain engagements, which, as he well knew, do very difficultly admit of any excuſe for the failure; and to go, after the ſtrict prohibition from Sophia, he was not to be forced by any human power. At length, after much deliberation, which during that night ſupplied the place of ſleep, he determined to feign himſelf ſick: for this ſuggeſted itſelf as the only means of failing the appointed viſit, without incenſing lady Bellaſton, which he had more than one reaſon of deſiring to avoid.

The firſt thing however which he did in the morning was to write an anſwer to Sophia, which he incloſed in one to Honour. He then diſpatched another to lady Bellaſton, containing the above-mentioned excuſe; and to this he ſoon received the following anſwer.

I am vexed that I cannot ſee you here this afternoon, but more concerned for the occaſion; take great care of yourſelf, and have the beſt advice, and I hope there will be no danger. — I am ſo tormented all this morning with fools, that I have ſcarce a moment's time to write to you. Adieu.

P. S. I will endeavour to call on you this evening at nine. — Be ſure to be alone.

Mr. Jones now received a viſit from Mrs. Miller, who, after ſome formal introduction, began the following

following ſpeech: I am very ſorry, Sir, to wait upon you on ſuch an occaſion; but I hope you will conſider the ill conſequence which it muſt be to the reputation of my poor girls, if my houſe ſhould once be talked of as a houſe of ill fame. I hope you won't think me, therefore, guilty of impertinence, if I beg you not to bring any more ladies in at that time of night. The clock had ſtruck two before one of them went away. I do aſſure you, Madam, ſaid Jones, the lady who was here laſt night, and who ſtaid the lateſt (for the other only brought me a letter) is a woman of very great faſhion, and my near relation. I don't know what faſhion ſhe is of, anſwered Mrs. Miller, but I am ſure no woman of virtue, unleſs a very near relation indeed, would viſit a young gentleman at ten at night, and ſtay four hours in his room with him alone: beſides, Sir, the behaviour of her chairmen ſhews what ſhe was; for they did nothing but make jeſts all the evening in the entry, and aſked Mr. Partridge, in the hearing of my own maid, if Madam intended to ſtay with his maſter all night? with a great deal of ſtuff not proper to be repeated. I have really a great reſpect for you, Mr. Jones, upon your own account; nay, I have a very high obligation to you for your generoſity to my couſin. Indeed, I did not know how very good you had been till lately. Little did I imagine to what dreadful courſes the poor man's diſtreſs had driven him. Little did I think, when you gave me the ten

guineas, that you had given them to a highwayman! O heavens! What goodneſs have you ſhewn! How you have preſerved this family! — The character which Mr. Allworthy hath formerly given me of you, was, I find, ſtrictly true. — And indeed if I had no obligations to you, my obligations to him are ſuch, that, on his account, I ſhould ſhew you the utmoſt reſpect in my power. — Nay, believe me, dear Mr. Jones, if my daughters and my own reputation were out of the caſe, I ſhould, for your own ſake, be ſorry that ſo pretty a young gentleman ſhould converſe with theſe women; but if you are reſolved to do it, I muſt beg you to take another lodging; for I do not myſelf like to have ſuch things carried on under my roof; but more eſpecially upon the account of my girls, who have little, heaven knows, beſides their characters to recommend them. Jones ſtarted, and changed colour at the name of Allworthy. Indeed, Mrs. Miller, anſwered he a little warmly, I do not take this at all kind. I will never bring any ſlander on your houſe; but I muſt inſiſt on ſeeing what company I pleaſe in my own room; and if that gives you any offence, I ſhall, as ſoon as I am able, look for another lodging. I am ſorry we muſt part then, Sir, ſaid ſhe, but I am convinced Mr. Allworthy himſelf would never come within my doors, if he had the leaſt ſuſpicion of my keeping an ill houſe. — Very well, Madam, ſaid Jones. — I hope, Sir, ſaid ſhe, you are not angry; for I would not for the world offend

any of Mr. Allworthy's family. I have not ſlept a wink all night about this matter.—I am ſorry I have diſturbed your reſt, Madam, ſaid Jones, but I beg you will ſend Partridge up to me immediately; which ſhe promiſed to do, and then, with a very low courteſy, retired.

As ſoon as Partridge arrived, Jones fell upon him in the moſt outrageous manner: — How often, ſaid he, am I to ſuffer for your folly, or rather for my own in keeping you? Is that tongue of yours reſolved upon my deſtruction? What have I done, Sir? anſwered affrighted Partridge. Who was it gave you authority to mention the ſtory of the robbery, or that the man you ſaw here was the perſon?—I, Sir? cries Partridge. Now don't be guilty of a falſhood in denying it, ſaid Jones. — If I did mention ſuch a matter, anſwers Partridge, I am ſure, I thought no harm: for I ſhould not have opened my lips, if it had not been to his own friends and relations, who, I imagined, would have let it go no farther. But I have a much heavier charge againſt you, cries Jones, than this. How durſt you, after all the precautions I gave you, mention the name of Mr. Allworthy in this houſe? Partridge denied that he ever had, with many oaths. How elſe, ſaid Jones, ſhould Mrs. Miller be acquainted that there was any connection between him and me? And it is but this moment ſhe told me, ſhe reſpected me on his account. — O lord, Sir, ſaid Partridge, I deſire only to be heard out; and to be ſure, never was any thing ſo unfortunate; hear me but out, and you will own how wrongfully

you have accuſed me. When Mrs. Honour came down ſtairs laſt night, ſhe met me in the entry, and aſked me, when my maſter had heard from Mr. Allworthy? and to be ſure Mrs. Miller heard the very words; and the moment Madam Honour was gone, ſhe called me into the parlour to her. Mr. Partridge, ſays ſhe, what Mr. Allworthy is that the gentlewoman mentioned? Is it the great Mr. Allworthy of Somerſetſhire? Upon my word, Madam, ſays I, I know nothing of the matter. — Sure, ſays ſhe, your maſter is not the Mr. Jones I have heard Mr. Allworthy talk of? Upon my word, Madam, ſays I, I know nothing of the matter. Then, ſays ſhe, turning to her daughter Nancy, ſays ſhe, as ſure as ten pence, this is the very young gentleman, and he agrees exactly with the 'ſquire's deſcription. The lord above knows who it was told her; for I am the arranteſt villain that ever walked upon two legs, if ever it came out of my mouth. — I promiſe, you, Sir, I can keep a ſecret when I am deſired. — Nay, Sir, ſo far was I from telling her any thing about Mr. Allworthy, that I told her the very direct contrary: for though I did not contradict it at that moment, yet, as ſecond thoughts, they ſay, are beſt; ſo when I came to conſider that ſomebody muſt have informed her, thinks I to myſelf, I will put an end to the ſtory: and ſo I went back again into the parlour ſome time afterwards, and ſays I, upon my word, ſays I, whoever, ſays I, told you that this gentleman was Mr. Jones; that is, ſays I, that this Mr. Jones

was that Mr. Jones, told you a confounded lie: and I beg, ſays I, you will never mention any ſuch matter, ſays I; for my maſter, ſays I, will think I muſt have told you ſo; and I defy any body in the houſe, ever to ſay, I mentioned any ſuch word. To be certain, Sir, it is a wonderful thing, and I have been thinking with myſelf ever ſince, how it was ſhe came to know it; not but I ſaw an old woman here t'other day a begging at the door, who looked as like her we ſaw in Warwickſhire, that cauſed all that miſchief to us. To be ſure it is never good to paſs by an old woman without giving her ſomething, eſpecially if ſhe looks at you; for all the world ſhall never perſuade me but that they have a great power to do miſchief, and to be ſure I ſhall never ſee an old woman again, but I ſhall think to myſelf, *Infandum, Regina, jubes renovare dolorem.*

The ſimplicity of Partridge ſet Jones a laughing, and put a final end to his anger, which had indeed ſeldom any long duration in his mind; and inſtead of commenting on his defence, he told him, he intended preſently to leave thoſe lodgings, and ordered him to go and endeavour to get him others.

CHAP. IV.

Which we hope will be very attentively perused by young people of both sexes.

PARTRIDGE had no sooner left Mr. Jones, than Mr. Nightingale, with whom he had now contracted a great intimacy, came to him, and after a short salutation, said: So, Tom, I hear you had company very late, last night. Upon my soul, you are a happy fellow, who have not been in town above a fortnight, and can keep chairs waiting at your door till two in the morning. He then ran on with much common-place raillery of the same kind, till Jones at last interrupted him, saying: I suppose you have received all this information from Mrs. Miller, who hath been up here a little while ago to give me warning. The good woman is afraid, it seems, of the reputation of her daughters. O she is wonderfully nice, says Mr. Nightingale, upon that account; if you remember, she would not let Nancy go with us to the masquerade. Nay, upon my honour, I think she's in the right of it, says Jones; however, I have taken her at her word, and have sent Partridge to look for another lodging. If you will, says Nightingale, we may, I believe, be again together; for to tell you a secret, which I desire you won't mention in the family, I intend to quit the house to-day. — What, hath Mrs. Miller given you warning too, my friend? cries Jones. No, answered the other;

but the rooms are not convenient enough. — Beſides, I am grown weary of this part of the town. I want to be nearer the places of diverſion; ſo I am going to Pall-mall. — And do you intend to make a ſecret of your going away? ſaid Jones. I promiſe you, anſwered Nightingale, I don't intend to bilk my lodgings; but I have a private reaſon for not taking a formal leave. Not ſo private, anſwered Jones; I promiſe you, I have ſeen it ever ſince the ſecond day of my coming to the houſe. — Here will be ſome wet eyes on your departure. — Poor Nancy! I pity her, faith! — Indeed, Jack, you have played the fool with that girl. — You have given her a longing, which, I am afraid, nothing will ever cure her of. — Nightingale anſwered: What the devil would you have me do? Would you have me marry her to cure her? — No, anſwered Jones, I would not have had you make love to her, as you have often done in my preſence. I have been aſtoniſhed at the blindneſs of her mother in never ſeeing it. Pugh, ſee it! cries Nightingale. What the devil ſhould ſhe ſee? Why ſee, ſaid Jones, that you have made her daughter diſtractedly in love with you. The poor girl cannot conceal it a moment; her eyes are never off from you, and ſhe always colours every time you come into the room. Indeed, I pity her heartily; for ſhe ſeems to be one of the beſt natured and honeſteſt of human creatures. And ſo, anſwered Nightingale, according to your doctrine, one muſt not amuſe one's ſelf by any common gallantries

with women, for fear they ſhould fall in love with us. Indeed, Jack, ſaid Jones, you wilfully miſunderſtand me; I do not fancy women are ſo apt to fall in love; but you have gone far beyond common gallantries. — What, do you ſuppoſe, ſays Nightingale, that we have been a-bed together? No, upon my honour, anſwered Jones, very ſeriouſly, I do not ſuppoſe ſo ill of you; nay, I will go farther, I do not imagine you have laid a regular premeditated ſcheme for the deſtruction of the quiet of a poor little creature, or have even foreſeen the conſequence: for I am ſure thou art a very good-natured fellow; and ſuch a one can never be guilty of a cruelty of that kind; but at the ſame time you have pleaſed your own vanity, without conſidering that this poor girl was made a ſacrifice to it; and while you have had no deſign but of amuſing an idle hour, you have actually given reaſon to flatter herſelf, that you had the moſt ſerious deſigns in her favour. Prithee, Jack, anſwer me honeſtly: to what have tended all thoſe elegant and luſcious deſcriptions of happineſs ariſing from violent and mutual fondneſs; all thoſe warm profeſſions of tenderneſs, and generous, diſintereſted love? Did you imagine ſhe would not apply them? Or, ſpeak ingenuouſly, did not you intend ſhe ſhould? Upon my ſoul, Tom, cries Nightingale, I did not think this was in thee. Thou wilt make an admirable parſon. — So, I ſuppoſe, you would not go to bed to Nancy now, if ſhe would let you? — No, cries Jones,

may I be d—n'd if I would. Tom, Tom, anſwered Nightingale, laſt night; remember laſt night:

— When ev'ry eye was clos'd, and the pale moon,
And ſilent ſtars ſhone conſcious of the theft.

Lookee, Mr. Nightingale, ſaid Jones, I am no canting hypocrite, nor do I pretend to the gift of chaſtity, more than my neighbours. I have been guilty with women, I own it; but am not conſcious that I have ever injured any. — Nor would I, to procure pleaſure to myſelf, be knowingly the cauſe of miſery to any human being.

Well, well, ſaid Nightingale, I believe you, and I am convinced you acquit me of any ſuch thing.

I do, from my heart, anſwered Jones, of having debauched the girl, but not from having gained her affections.

If I have, ſaid Nightingale, I am ſorry for it; but time and abſence will ſoon wear off ſuch impreſſions. It is a receipt I muſt take myſelf: for to confeſs the truth to you, — I never liked any girl half ſo much in my whole life; but I muſt let you into the whole ſecret, Tom. My father hath provided a match for me, with a woman I never ſaw; and ſhe is now coming to town, in order for me to make my addreſſes to her.

At theſe words Jones burſt into a loud fit of laughter; when Nightingale cried: — Nay, prithee don't turn me into ridicule. The devil take me if I am not half

mad about this matter! my poor Nancy! Oh Jones, Jones, I wiſh I had a fortune in my own poſſeſſion.

I heartily wiſh you had, cries Jones; for if this be the caſe, I ſincerily pity you both: but ſurely you don't intend to go away without taking your leave of her?

I would not, anſwered Nightingale, undergo the pain of taking leave for ten thouſand pound; beſides I am convinced, inſtead of anſwering any good purpoſe, it would only ſerve to inflame my poor Nancy the more. I beg therefore, you would not mention a word of it to-day, and in the evening, or to-morrow morning, I intend to depart.

Jones promiſed he would not; and ſaid, upon reflection he thought, as he had determined and was obliged to leave her, he took the moſt prudent method. He then told Nightingale, he ſhould be very glad to lodge in the ſame houſe with him; and it was accordingly agreed between them, that Nightingale ſhould procure him either the ground-floor, or the two pair of ſtairs; for the young gentleman himſelf was to occupy that which was between them.

This Nightingale, of whom we ſhall be preſently obliged to ſay a little more, was, in the ordinary tranſactions of life, a man of ſtrict honour, and what is more rare among young gentlemen of the town, one of ſtrict honeſty too; yet in affairs of love he was ſomewhat looſer in his morals; not that he was even here as void of principle as gentlemen ſometimes

are, and oftener affect to be; but it is certain he had been guilty of ſome indefenſible treachery to women, and had in a certain myſtery, called making love, practiſed many deceits, which if he had uſed in trade, he would have been counted the greateſt villain upon earth.

But as the world, I know not well for what reaſon, agree to ſee this treachery in a better light, he was ſo far from being aſhamed of his iniquities of this kind, that he gloried in them, and would often boaſt of his ſkill in gaining of women, and his triumphs over their hearts, for which he had before this time received ſome rebukes from Jones, who always expreſt great bitterneſs againſt any miſbehaviour to the fair part of the ſpecies, who, if conſidered, he ſaid, as they ought to be, in the light of the deareſt friends, were to be cultivated, honoured, and careſſed with the utmoſt love and tenderneſs; but, if regarded as enemies, were a conqueſt of which a man ought rather to be aſhamed than to value himſelf upon it.

CHAP. V.

A ſhort account of the hiſtory of Mrs. Miller.

JONES this day eat a pretty good dinner for a ſick man, that is to ſay, the larger half of a ſhoulder of mutton. In the afternoon he received an invitation from Mrs. Miller to drink tea: for that good woman having learnt, either by means of Partridge, or by ſome other means natural or ſupernatural, that he had a connection with Mr. Allworthy, could not endure the thoughts of parting with him in an angry manner.

Jones accepted the invitation; and no ſooner was the tea-kettle removed, and the girls ſent out of the room, than the widow, without much preface, began as follows: Well, there are very ſurpriſing things happen in this world; but certainly it is a wonderful buſineſs, that I ſhould have a relation of Mr. Allworthy in my houſe, and never know any thing of the matter. Alas! Sir, you little imagine what a friend that beſt of gentlemen hath been to me and mine. Yes, Sir, I am not aſhamed to own it; it is owing to his goodneſs, that I did not long ſince periſh for want, and leave my poor little wretches, two deſtitute, helpleſs, friendleſs orphans, to the care, or rather to the cruelty, of the world.

You muſt know, Sir, though I am now reduced to get my living by letting lodgings, I was born and bred a gentlewoman. My father was an officer of the army, and died in a conſiderable rank: but he lived up to his pay; and as that expired with him, his family, at his death, became beggars. We were three ſiſters. One of us had the good luck to die ſoon after of the ſmall-pox: a lady was ſo kind as to take the ſecond out of charity, as ſhe ſaid, to wait upon her. The mother of this lady had been a ſervant to my grandmother; and having inherited a vaſt fortune from her father, which he had got by pawnbroking, was married to a gentleman of great eſtate and faſhion. She uſed my ſiſter ſo barbarouſly, often upbraiding her with her birth and poverty, calling her in deriſion a gentlewoman, that I believe ſhe at length broke the heart of the poor girl. In ſhort, ſhe likewiſe died within a twelvemonth after my father. Fortune thought proper to provide better for me, and within a month from his deceaſe I was married to a clergyman, who had been my lover a long time before, and who had been very ill uſed by my father on that account: for though my poor father could not give any of us a ſhilling, yet he bred us up as delicately, conſidered us, and would have had us conſider ourſelves, as highly, as if we had been the richeſt heireſſes. But my dear huſband forgot all this uſage, and the moment we were become fatherleſs,

he immediately renewed his addreſſes to me ſo warmly, that I, who always liked, and now more than ever eſteemed him, ſoon complied. Five years did I live in a ſtate of perfect happineſs with that beſt of men, 'till at laſt — Oh! cruel, cruel fortune, that ever ſeparated us, that deprived me of the kindeſt of huſbands, and my poor girls of the tendereſt parent. — O my poor girls! you never knew the bleſſing which ye loſt. — I am aſhamed, Mr. Jones, of this womaniſh weakneſs; but I ſhall never mention him without tears. — I ought rather, Madam, ſaid Jones, to be aſhamed that I do not accompany you. — Well, Sir, continued ſhe, I was now left a ſecond time in a much worſe condition than before; beſides the terrible affliction I was to encounter, I had now two children to provide for; and was, if poſſible, more pennyleſs than ever, when that good, that glorious man, Mr. Allworthy, who had ſome little acquaintance with my huſband, accidentally heard of my diſtreſs, and immediately writ this letter to me. Here, Sir, — here it is; I put it into my pocket to ſhew it you. This is the letter, Sir; I muſt and will read it to you.

MADAM,

I Heartily condole with you on your late grievous loſs, which your own good ſenſe, and the excellent leſſons you muſt have learnt from the worthieſt of

men, will better enable you to bear, than any advice which I am capable of giving. Nor have I any doubt that you, whom I have heard to be the tendereſt of mothers, will ſuffer any immoderate indulgence of grief to prevent you from diſcharging your duty to thoſe poor infants, who now alone ſtand in need of your tenderneſs.

However, as you muſt be ſuppoſed at preſent to be incapable of much worldly conſideration, you will pardon my having ordered a perſon to wait on you, and to pay you twenty guineas, which I beg you will accept 'till I have the pleaſure of ſeeing you, and believe me to be, Madam, &c.

This letter, Sir, I received within a fortnight after the irreparable loſs I have mentioned, and within a fortnight afterwards, Mr. Allworthy, — the bleſſed Mr. Allworthy, came to pay me a viſit, when he placed me in the houſe where you now ſee me, gave me a large ſum of money to furniſh it, and ſettled an annuity of 50 l. a year upon me, which I have conſtanly received ever ſince. Judge then, Mr. Jones, in what regard I muſt hold a benefactor, to whom I owe the preſervation of my life, and of thoſe dear children, for whoſe ſake alone my life is valuable. — Do not, therefore, think me impertinent, Mr. Jones, (ſince I muſt eſteem one for whom I know Mr. Allworthy hath ſo much value) if I beg you not

to converſe with theſe wicked women. You are a young gentleman, and do not know half their artful wiles. Do not be angry with me, Sir, for what I ſaid upon account of my houſe; you muſt be ſenſible it would be the ruin of my poor dear girls. Beſides, Sir, you cannot but be acquainted, that Mr. Allworthy himſelf would never forgive my conniving at ſuch matters, and particularly with you.

Upon my word, Madam, ſaid Jones, you need make no farther apology; nor do I in the leaſt take any thing ill you have ſaid: but give me leave, as no one can have more value than myſelf for Mr. Allworthy, to deliver you from one miſtake, which, perhaps, would not be altogether for his honour: I do aſſure you, I am no relation of his.

Alas! Sir, anſwered ſhe, I know you are not. I know very well who you are; for Mr. Allworthy hath told me all: but I do aſſure you, had you been twenty times his ſon, he could not have expreſſed more regard for you, than he hath often expreſſed in my preſence. You need not be aſhamed, Sir, of what you are; I promiſe you no good perſon will eſteem you the leſs on that account. No, Mr. Jones; the words, diſhonourable birth, are nonſenſe, as my dear, dear huſband uſed to ſay, unleſs the word, diſhonourable, be applied to the parents; for the children can derive no real diſhonour from an act of which they are entirely innocent.

Here Jones heaved a deep ſigh, and then ſaid:

Since

Since I perceive, Madam, you really do know me, and Mr. Allworthy hath thought proper to mention my name to you; and ſince you have been ſo explicit with me as to your own affairs, I will acquaint you with ſome more circumſtances concerning myſelf. And theſe Mrs. Miller having expreſſed great deſire and curioſity to hear, he began and related to her his whole hiſtory, without once mentioning the name of Sophia.

There is a kind of ſympathy in honeſt minds, by means of which they give an eaſy credit to each other. Mrs. Miller believed all which Jones told her to be true, and expreſt much pity and concern for him. She was beginning to comment on the ſtory, but Jones interrupted her: for as the hour of aſſignation now drew nigh, he began to ſtipulate for a ſecond interview with the lady that evening, which he promiſed ſhould be the laſt at her houſe; ſwearing, at the ſame time, that ſhe was one of great diſtinction, and that nothing but what was entirely innocent was to paſs between them; and I do firmly believe he intended to keep his word.

Mrs. Miller was at length prevailed on, and Jones departed to his chamber, where he ſat alone till twelve o'clock, but no lady Bellaſton appeared.

As we have ſaid that this lady had a great affection for Jones, and as it muſt have appeared that ſhe really had ſo, the reader may perhaps wonder at the firſt failure of her appointment, as ſhe apprehended

him to be confined by ſickneſs, a ſeaſon when friendſhip ſeems moſt to require ſuch viſits. This behaviour, therefore, in the lady, may, by ſome, be condemned as unnatural; but that is not our fault; for our buſineſs is only to record truth.

CHAP. VI.

Containing a ſcene which we doubt not will affect all our readers.

MR. Jones cloſed not his eyes during all the former part of the night; not owing it to any uneaſineſs which he conceived at being diſappointed by lady Bellaſton; nor was Sophia herſelf, though moſt of his waking hours were juſtly to be charged to her account, the preſent cauſe of diſpelling his ſlumbers. In fact, poor Jones was one of the beſt-natured fellows alive, and had all that weakneſs which is called compaſſion, and which diſtinguiſhes this imperfect character from that noble firmneſs of mind, which rolls a man, as it were, within himſelf, and, like a poliſhed bowl, enables him to run through the world, without being once ſtopped by the calamities which happen to others. He could not help, therefore, compaſſionating the ſituation of poor Nancy, whoſe love for Mr. Nightingale ſeemed to him ſo apparent, that he was aſtoniſhed at the

blindneſs of her mother, who had more than once, the preceding evening, remarked to him the great change in the temper of her daughter, who from being, ſhe ſaid, one of the livelieſt, merrieſt girls in the world, was, on a ſudden, become all gloom and melancholy.

Sleep, however, at length got the better of all reſiſtance; and now, as if he had really been a deity, as the antients imagined, and an offended one too, he ſeemed to enjoy his dear-bought conqueſt. — To ſpeak ſimply, and without any metaphor, Mr. Jones ſlept 'till eleven the next morning, and would, perhaps, have continued in the ſame quiet ſituation much longer, had not a violent uproar awakened him.

Partridge was now ſummoned, who, being aſked what was the matter, anſwered, that there was a dreadful hurricane below ſtairs; that Miſs Nancy was in fits; and that the other ſiſter and the mother, were both crying and lamenting over her. Jones expreſſed much concern at this news, which Partridge endeavoured to relieve, by ſaying with a ſmile, he fancied the young lady was in no danger of death; for that Suſan (which was the name of the maid) had given him to underſtand, it was nothing more than a common affair. In ſhort, ſaid he, Miſs Nancy hath had a mind to be as wiſe as her mother; that's all. She was a little hungry, it ſeems, and ſo ſat down to dinner before grace was ſaid; and ſo there

is a child coming for the Foundling-Hoſpital. — Prithee leave thy ſtupid jeſting, cries Jones. Is the miſery of theſe poor wretches a ſubject of mirth? Go immediately to Mrs. Miller, and tell her, I beg leave — Stay, you will make ſome blunder; I will go myſelf; for ſhe deſired me to breakfaſt with her. He then roſe, and dreſſed himſelf as faſt as he could: and while he was dreſſing, Partridge, notwithſtanding many ſevere rebukes, could not avoid throwing forth certain pieces of brutality, commonly called jeſts, on this occaſion. Jones was no ſooner dreſſed, than he walked down ſtairs, and knocking at the door, was preſently admitted, by the maid, into the outward parlour, which was as empty of company as it was of any apparatus for eating. Mrs. Miller was in the inner room with her daughter, whence the maid preſently brought a meſſage to Mr. Jones, that her miſtreſs hoped he would excuſe the diſappointment, but an accident had happened, which made it impoſſible for her to have the pleaſure of his company at breakfaſt that day; and begged his pardon for not ſending him up notice ſooner. Jones deſired, ſhe would give herſelf no trouble about any thing ſo trifling as his diſappointment; that he was heartily ſorry for the occaſion; and that if he could be of any ſervice to her, ſhe might command him.

He had ſcarce ſpoke theſe words, when Mrs. Miller, who heard them all, ſuddenly threw open

the door, and coming out to him, in a flood of tears, ſaid: O Mr. Jones, you are certainly one of the beſt young men alive. I give you a thouſand thanks for your kind offer of your ſervice; but, alas! Sir, it is out of your power to preſerve my poor girl. O my child, my child! ſhe is undone, ſhe is ruined for ever! I hope, Madam, ſaid Jones, no villain —— O Mr. Jones, ſaid ſhe, that villain who yeſterday left my lodgings, hath betrayed my poor girl; hath deſtroyed her. —— I know you are a man of honour. You have a good — a noble heart, Mr. Jones. The actions to which I have been myſelf a witneſs, could proceed from no other. I will tell you all; nay, indeed, it is impoſſible, after what hath happened, to keep it a ſecret. That Nightingale, that barbarous villain, hath undone my daughter. She is — ſhe is — Oh! Mr. Jones, my girl is with child by him; and in that condition he hath deſerted her. Here! here, Sir, is his cruel letter: read it, Mr. Jones, and tell me if ſuch another monſter lives.

The letter was as follows:

Dear Nancy,

AS I found it impoſſible to mention to you what, I am afraid, will be no leſs ſhocking to you, than it is to me, I have taken this method to inform you,

that my father inſiſts upon my immediately paying my addreſſes to a young lady of fortune, whom he hath provided for my — I need not write the deteſted word. Your own good underſtanding will make you ſenſible, how entirely I am obliged to an obedience, by which I ſhall be for ever excluded from your dear arms. The fondneſs of your mother may encourage you to truſt her with the unhappy conſequence of our love, which may be eaſily kept a ſecret from the world, and for which I will take care to provide, as I will for you. I wiſh you may feel leſs on this account than I have ſuffered: but ſummon all your fortitude to your aſſiſtance, and forgive and forget the man, whom nothing but the proſpect of certain ruin could have forced to write this letter. I bid you to forget me, I mean only as a lover; but the beſt of friends you ſhall ever find in

Your faithful, though unhappy,
J. N.

When Jones had read this letter, they both ſtood ſilent during a minute, looking at each other; at laſt he began thus: I cannot expreſs, Madam, how much I am ſhocked at what I have read; yet let me beg you, in one particular, to take the writer's advice. Conſider the reputation of your daughter. — It is gone, it is loſt, Mr. Jones, cry'd ſhe, as well as her innocence. She received the letter in

a room full of company, and immediately ſwooning away upon opening it, the contents were known to every one preſent. But the loſs of her reputation, bad as it is, is not the worſt; I ſhall loſe my child; ſhe hath attempted twice to deſtroy herſelf already: and though ſhe hath been hitherto prevented, vows ſhe will not out-live it; nor could I myſelf out-live any accident of that nature. — What then will become of my little Betſy, a helpleſs infant orphan? And the poor little wretch will, I believe, break her heart at the miſeries with which ſhe ſees her ſiſter and myſelf diſtracted, while ſhe is ignorant of the cauſe. — O 'tis the moſt ſenſible, and beſt-natured little thing. The barbarous cruel — hath deſtroyed us all. O my poor children! Is this the reward of all my cares? Is this the fruit of all my proſpects? Have I ſo chearfully undergone all the labours and duties of a mother? Have I been ſo tender of their infancy, ſo careful of their education? Have I been toiling ſo many years, denying myſelf even the conveniencies of life to provide ſome little ſuſtenance for them, to loſe one or both in ſuch a manner? Indeed, Madam, ſaid Jones, with tears in his eyes, I pity you from my ſoul. — O Mr. Jones, anſwered ſhe, even you, though I know the goodneſs of your heart, can have no idea of what I feel. The beſt, the kindeſt, the moſt dutiful of children! O my poor Nancy, the darling of my ſoul! the delight of my eyes; the pride of my heart:

too much, indeed, my pride; for to thoſe fooliſh, ambitious hopes, ariſing from her beauty, I owe her ruin. Alas! I ſaw with pleaſure the liking which this young man had for her. I thought it an honourable affection; and flattered my fooliſh vanity with the thoughts of ſeeing her married to one ſo much her ſuperior. And a thouſand times in my preſence, nay, often in yours, he hath endeavoured to ſooth and encourage theſe hopes by the moſt generous expreſſions of diſintereſted love, which he hath always directed to my poor girl, and which I, as well as ſhe, believed to be real. Could I have believed that theſe were only ſnares laid to betray the innocence of my child, and for the ruin of us all? — At theſe words little Betſy came running into the room, crying: Dear Mamma, for heaven's ſake, come to my ſiſter; for ſhe is in another fit, and my couſin can't hold her. Mrs. Miller immediately obeyed the ſummons; but firſt ordered Betſy to ſtay with Mr. Jones, and begged him to entertain her a few minutes, ſaying, in the moſt pathetic voice: Good heaven! let me preſerve one of my children at leaſt.

Jones, in compliance with this requeſt, did all he could to comfort the little girl, though he was, in reality, himſelf very highly affected with Mrs. Miller's ſtory. He told her, her ſiſter would be ſoon very well again: that by taking on in that manner, ſhe would not only make her ſiſter worſe,

but make her mother ill too. Indeed, Sir, ſays ſhe, I would not do any thing to hurt them for the world. I would burſt my heart rather than they ſhould ſee me cry. — But my poor ſiſter can't ſee me cry. — I am afraid ſhe will never be able to ſee me cry any more. Indeed, I can't part with her; indeed I can't. — And then poor Mamma too, what will become of her? — She ſays, ſhe will die too, and leave me: but I am reſolved I won't be left behind. And are you not afraid to die, my little Betſy? ſaid Jones. Yes, anſwered ſhe, I was always afraid to die; becauſe I muſt have left my Mamma, and my ſiſter; but I am not afraid to go any where with thoſe I love.

Jones was ſo pleaſed with this anſwer, that he eagerly kiſſed the child; and ſoon after Mrs. Miller returned, ſaying, ſhe thanked heaven, Nancy was now come to herſelf. And now, Betſy, ſays ſhe, you may go in; for your ſiſter is better, and longs to ſee you. She then turned to Jones, and began to renew her apologies for having diſappointed him of his breakfaſt.

I hope, Madam, ſaid Jones, I ſhall have a more exquiſite repaſt than any you could have provided for me. This, I aſſure you, will be the caſe, if I can do any ſervice to this little family of love. But whatever ſucceſs may attend my endeavours, I am reſolved to attempt it. I am very much deceived in Mr. Nightingale, if, notwithſtanding what hath happened,

he hath not much goodneſs of heart at the bottom, as well as a very violent affection for your daughter. If this be the caſe, I think the picture which I ſhall lay before him, will affect him. Endeavour, Madam, to comfort yourſelf, and Miſs Nancy, as well as you can. I will go inſtantly in queſt of Mr. Nightingale; and I hope to bring you good news.

Mrs. Miller fell upon her knees, and invoked all the bleſſings of heaven upon Mr. Jones; to which ſhe afterwards added the moſt paſſionate expreſſions of gratitude. He then departed to find Mr. Nightingale, and the good woman returned to comfort her daughter, who was ſomewhat cheared at what her mother told her; and both joined in reſounding the praiſes of Mr. Jones.

CHAP. VII.

The interview between Mr. Jones and Mr. Nightingale.

THE good or evil we confer on others, very often, I believe, recoils on ourſelves. For as men of a benign diſpoſition enjoy their own acts of beneficence, equally with thoſe to whom they are done, ſo there are ſcarce any natures ſo entirely diabolical, as to be capable of doing injuries, without paying themſelves ſome pangs, for the ruin which they bring on their fellow creatures.

Mr. Nightingale, at leaſt, was not ſuch a perſon. On the contrary, Jones found him in his new lodgings, ſitting melancholy by the fire, and ſilently lamenting the unhappy ſituation in which he had placed poor Nancy. He no ſooner ſaw his friend appear, than he roſe haſtily to meet him; and after much congratulation ſaid: Nothing could be more opportune than this kind viſit; for I was never more in the ſpleen in my life.

I am ſorry, anſwered Jones, that I bring news very unlikely to relieve you; nay, what I am convinced muſt, of all other, ſhock you the moſt. However, it is neceſſary you ſhould know it. Without further preface then, I come to you, Mr. Nightingale, from a worthy family, which you have involved in miſery and ruin. Mr. Nightingale changed colour at theſe words; but Jones, without regarding it, proceeded, in the livelieſt manner, to paint the tragical ſtory, with which the reader was acquainted in the laſt chapter.

Nightingale never once interrupted the narration, though he diſcovered violent emotions at many parts of it. But when it was concluded, after fetching a deep ſigh, he ſaid: What you tell me, my friend, affects me in the tendereſt manner. Sure, there never was ſo curſed an accident as the poor girl's betraying my letter. Her reputation might otherwiſe have been ſafe, and the affair might have remained a profound ſecret; and then the girl might have gone off never the worſe; for many ſuch things happen in this town:

and if the huſband ſhould ſuſpect a little, when it is too late, it will be his wiſer conduct to conceal his ſuſpicion both from his wife and the world.

Indeed, my friend, anſwered Jones, this could not have been the caſe with your poor Nancy. You have ſo entirely gained her affections, that it is the loſs of you, and not of her reputation, which afflicts her, and will end in the deſtruction of her and her family. Nay, for that matter, I promiſe you, cries Nightingale, ſhe hath my affections ſo abſolutely, that my wife, whoever ſhe is to be, will have very little ſhare in them. And is it poſſible then, ſaid Jones, you can think of deſerting her? Why what can I do? anſwered the other. Aſk Miſs Nancy, replied Jones warmly. In the condition to which you have reduced her, I ſincerely think ſhe ought to determine what reparation you ſhall make her. Her intereſt alone, and not yours, ought to be your ſole conſideration. But if you aſk me what you ſhall do? What can you do leſs, cries Jones, than fulfil the expectations of her family, and her own. Nay, I ſincerely tell you, they were mine too, ever ſince I firſt ſaw you together. You will pardon me, if I preſume on the friendſhip you have favoured me with, moved as I am with compaſſion for thoſe poor creatures. But your own heart will beſt ſuggeſt to you, whether you have never intended, by your conduct, to perſuade the mother, as well as the daughter, into an opinion, that you deſigned honourably: and if ſo, though there may have been no direct promiſe of

marriage in the caſe, I will leave to your own good underſtanding, how far you are bound to proceed.

Nay, I muſt not only confeſs what you have hinted, ſaid Nightingale; but, I am afraid, even that very promiſe you mention I have given. And can you, after owning that, ſaid Jones, heſitate a moment? Conſider, my friend, anſwered the other; I know you are a man of honour, and would adviſe no one to act contrary to its rules; if there were no other objection, can I, after this publication of her diſgrace, think of ſuch an alliance with honour? Undoubtedly, replied Jones, and the very beſt and trueſt honour, which is goodneſs, requires it of you. As you mention a ſcruple of this kind, you will give me leave to examine it. Can you, with honour, be guilty of having, under falſe pretences, deceived a young woman and her family, and of having, by theſe means, treacherouſly robbed her of her innocence? Can you, with honour, be the knowing, the wilful occaſion, nay, the artful contriver of the ruin of a human being? Can you, with honour, deſtroy the fame, the peace, nay, probably, both the life and ſoul too of this creature? Can honour bear the thought, that this creature is a tender, helpleſs, defenceleſs, young woman? A young woman who loves, who doats on you, who dies for you; who hath placed the utmoſt confidence in your promiſes; and to that confidence hath ſacrificed every thing which is dear to her? Can honour ſupport ſuch contemplations as theſe a moment?

Common ſenſe, indeed, ſaid Nightingale, warrants all you ſay; but yet you well know the opinion of the world is ſo contrary to it, that if I was to marry a whore, though my own, I ſhould be aſhamed of ever ſhewing my face again.

Fie upon it, Mr. Nightingale, ſaid Jones, do not call her by ſo ungenerous a name: when you promiſed to marry her, ſhe became your wife; and ſhe hath ſinned more againſt prudence than virtue. And what is this world, which you would be aſhamed to face, but the vile, the fooliſh, and the profligate? Forgive me, if I ſay ſuch a ſhame muſt proceed from falſe modeſty, which always attends falſe honour as its ſhadow.—— But I am well aſſured there is not a man of real ſenſe and goodneſs in the world, who would not honour and applaud the action. But admit no other would, would not your own heart, my friend, applaud it? And do not the warm, rapturous ſenſations, which we feel from the conſciouſneſs of an honeſt, noble, generous, benevolent, action, convey more delight to the mind, than the undeſerved praiſe of millions? Set the alternative fairly before your eyes. On the one ſide, ſee this poor, unhappy, tender, believing girl, in the arms of her wretched mother, breathing her laſt. Hear her breaking heart in agonies, ſighing out your name; and lamenting, rather than accuſing, the cruelty which weighs her down to deſtruction. Paint to your imagination the circumſtances of her fond, deſpairing parent, driven to madneſs, or

perhaps, to death, by the loſs of her lovely daughter. View the poor, helpleſs, orphan infant: and when your mind hath dwelt a moment only on ſuch ideas, conſider yourſelf as the cauſe of all the ruin of this poor, little, worthy, defenceleſs family. On the other ſide, conſider yourſelf as relieving them from their temporary ſufferings. Think with what joy, with what tranſports, that lovely creature will fly to your arms. See her blood returning to her pale cheeks, her fire to her languid eyes, and raptures to her tortured breaſt. Conſider the exultations of her mother, the happineſs of all. Think of this little family made, by one act of yours, completely happy. Think of this alternative, and ſure I am miſtaken in my friend, if it requires any long deliberation, whether he will ſink theſe wretches down for ever, or, by one generous, noble reſolution, raiſe them all, from the brink of miſery and deſpair, to the higheſt pitch of human happineſs. Add to this but one conſideration more; the conſideration that it is your duty ſo to do — that the miſery from which you will relieve theſe poor people, is the miſery which you yourſelf have wilfully brought upon them.

O my dear friend, cries Nightingale, I wanted not your eloquence to rouſe me. I pity poor Nancy from my ſoul, and would willingly give any thing in my power, that no familiarities had ever paſſed between us. Nay, believe me, I had many ſtruggles with my paſſion, before I could prevail with myſelf to write

that cruel letter, which hath cauſed all the miſery in that unhappy family. If I had no inclinations to conſult but my own, I would marry her to-morrow morning: I would, by heaven; but you will eaſily imagine how impoſſible it would be to prevail on my father to conſent to ſuch a match; beſides, he hath provided another for me; and to-morrow, by his expreſs command, I am to wait on the lady.

I have not the honour to know your father, ſaid Jones; but ſuppoſe he could be perſuaded, would you yourſelf conſent to the only means of preſerving theſe poor people? As eagerly as I would purſue my happineſs, anſwered Nightingale; for I never ſhall find it in any other woman.—O my dear friend, could you imagine what I have felt within theſe twelve hours for my poor girl, I am convinced ſhe would not engroſs all your pity. Paſſion leads me only to her; and if I had any fooliſh ſcruples of honour, you have fully ſatisfied them: could my father be induced to comply with my deſires, nothing would be wanting to compleat my own happineſs, or that of my Nancy.

Then I am reſolved to undertake it, ſaid Jones. You muſt not be angry with me, in whatever light it may be neceſſary to ſet this affair, which, you may depend on it, could not otherwiſe be long hid from him: for things of this nature make a quick progreſs, when once they get abroad, as this unhappily hath already. Beſides, ſhould any fatal accident follow, as, upon my ſoul, I am afraid, will, unleſs immediately prevented,

prevented, the public would ring of your name in a manner which, if your father hath common humanity, muſt offend him. If you will therefore tell me, where I may find the old gentleman, I will not loſe a moment in the buſineſs; which while I purſue, you cannot do a more generous action than by paying a viſit to the poor girl. You will find I have not exaggerated in the account I have given of the wretchedneſs of the family.

Nightingale immediately conſented to the propoſal; and now having acquainted Jones with his father's lodging, and the coffee-houſe where he would moſt probably find him, he heſitated a moment, and then ſaid: My dear Tom, you are going to undertake an impoſſibility. If you knew my father, you would never think of obtaining his conſent. — Stay, there is one way — ſuppoſe you told him I was already married, it might be eaſier to reconcile him to the fact after it was done; and upon my honour, I am ſo affected with what you have ſaid, and I love my Nancy ſo paſſionately, I almoſt wiſh it was done, whatever might be the conſequence.

Jones greatly approved the hint, and promiſed to purſue it. They then ſeparated, Nightingale to viſit his Nancy, and Jones in queſt of the old gentleman.

CHAP. VIII.

What passed between Jones and old Mr. Nightingale; with the arrival of a person not yet mentioned in this history.

NOTWITSTANDING the sentiment of the Roman satirist, which denies the divinity of fortune, and the opinion of Seneca to the same purpose; Cicero, who was, I believe, a wiser man than either of them, expressly holds the contrary; and certain it is, there are some incidents in life so very strange and unaccountable, that it seems to require more than human skill and foresight in producing them.

Of this kind was what now happened to Jones, who found Mr. Nightingale the elder, in so critical a minute, that fortune, if she was really worthy all the worship she received at Rome, could not have contrived such another. In short, the old gentleman and the father of the young lady whom he intended for his son, had been hard at it for many hours; and the latter was just now gone, and had left the former delighted with the thoughts that he had succeeded in a long contention, which had been between the two fathers of the future bride and bridegroom; in which both endeavoured to over-reach the other, and, as it not rarely happens in such cases, both had retreated fully satisfied of having obtained the victory.

This gentleman whom Mr. Jones now viſited, was what they call a man of the world; that is to ſay, a man who directs his conduct in this world, as one who being fully perſuaded there is no other, is reſolved to make the moſt of this. In his early years he had been bred to trade; but having acquired a very good fortune, he had lately declined his buſineſs; or, to ſpeak more properly, had changed it from dealing in goods, to dealing only in money, of which he had always a plentiful fund at command, and of which he knew very well how to make a very plentiful advantage, ſometimes of the neceſſities of private men, and ſometimes of thoſe of the public. He had indeed converſed ſo entirely with money, that it may be almoſt doubted, whether he imagined there was any other thing really exiſting in the world: this, as leaſt, may be certainly averred, that he firmly believed, nothing elſe to have any real value.

The reader will, I fancy, allow, that fortune could not have culled out a more improper perſon for Mr. Jones to attack with any probability of ſucceſs; nor could the whimſical lady have directed this attack at a more unſeaſonable time.

As money then was always uppermoſt in this gentleman's thoughts; ſo the moment he ſaw a ſtranger within his doors, it immediately occurred to his imagination, that ſuch ſtranger was either come to bring him money, or to fetch it from him. And according as one or other of theſe thoughts prevailed,

he conceived a favourable or unfavourable idea of the perſon who approached him.

Unluckily for Jones, the latter of theſe was the aſcendant at preſent; for as a young gentleman had viſited him the day before, with a bill from his ſon for a play-debt, he apprehended, at the firſt ſight of Jones, that he was come on ſuch another errand. Jones therefore had no ſooner told him, that he was come on his ſon's account, than the old gentleman, being confirmed in his ſuſpicion, burſt forth into an exclamation, that he would loſe his labour. Is it then poſſible, Sir, anſwered Jones, that you can gueſs my buſineſs? If I do gueſs it, replied the other, I repeat again to you, you will loſe your labour. What, I ſuppoſe, you are one of thoſe ſparks who lead my ſon into all thoſe ſcenes of riot and debauchery, which will be his deſtruction; but I ſhall pay no more of his bills, I promiſe you. I expect he will quit all ſuch company for the future. If I had imagined otherwiſe, I ſhould not have provided a wife for him; for I would be inſtrumental in the ruin of nobody. How, Sir, ſaid Jones, and was this lady of your providing? Pray, Sir, anſwered the old gentleman, how comes it to be any concern of your's? — Nay, dear Sir, replied Jones, be not offended that I intereſt myſelf in what regards your ſon's happineſs, for whom I have ſo great an honour and value. It was upon that very account

I came to wait on you. I can't expreſs the ſatisfaction you have given me by what you ſay; for I do aſſure you, your ſon is a perſon for whom I have the higheſt honour. — Nay, Sir, it is not eaſy to expreſs the eſteem I have for you, who could be ſo generous, ſo good, ſo kind, ſo indulgent, to provide ſuch a match for your ſon; a woman, who, I dare ſwear, will make him one of the happieſt men upon earth.

There is ſcarce any thing which ſo happily introduces men to our good liking, as having conceived ſome alarm at their firſt appearance; when once thoſe apprehenſions begin to vaniſh, we ſoon forget the fears which they occaſioned, and look on ourſelves as indebted for our preſent eaſe, to thoſe very perſons who at firſt raiſed our fears.

Thus it happened to Nightingale, who no ſooner found that Jones had no demand on him, as he ſuſpected, than he began to be pleaſed with his preſence. Pray, good Sir, ſaid he, be pleaſed to ſit down. I do not remember to have ever had the pleaſure of ſeeing you before; but if you are a friend of my ſon, and have any thing to ſay concerning this young lady, I ſhall be glad to hear you. As to her making him happy, it will be his own fault if ſhe doth not. I have diſcharged my duty, in taking care of the main article. She will bring him a fortune capable of making any reaſonable, prudent, ſober man, happy. Undoubtedly,

cries Jones, for ſhe is in herſelf a fortune; ſo beautiful, ſo genteel, ſo ſweet-tempered, and ſo well educated; ſhe is indeed a moſt accompliſhed young lady; ſings admirably well, and hath a moſt delicate hand at the harpſichord. I did not know any of theſe matters, anſwered the old gentleman, for I never ſaw the lady; but I do not like her the worſe for what you tell me; and I am the better pleaſed with her father for not laying any ſtreſs on theſe qualifications in our bargain. I ſhall always think it a proof of his underſtanding. A ſilly fellow would have brought in theſe articles as an addition to her fortune; but to give him his due, he never mentioned any ſuch matter; though to be ſure they are no diſparagements to a woman. I do aſſure you, Sir, cries Jones, ſhe hath them all in the moſt eminent degree: for my part, I own I was afraid you might have been a little backward, a little leſs inclined to the match: for your ſon told me, you had never ſeen the lady; therefore, I came, Sir, in that caſe, to entreat you, to conjure you, as you value the happineſs of your ſon, not to be averſe to his match with a woman who hath not only all the good qualities I have mentioned, but many more. —— If that was your buſineſs, Sir, ſaid the old gentleman, we are both obliged to you; and you may be perfectly eaſy; for I give you my word, I was very well ſatisfied with her fortune. Sir, anſwered Jones, I honour you every moment more

and more. To be ſo eaſily ſatisfied, ſo very moderate on that account, is a proof of the ſoundneſs of your underſtanding, as well as the nobleneſs of your mind. — Not ſo very moderate, young gentleman, not ſo very moderate, anſwered the father. — Still more and more noble, replied Jones, and give me leave to add, ſenſible: for ſure it is little leſs than madneſs to conſider money as the ſole foundation of happineſs. Such a woman as this, with her little, her nothing of a fortune — I find, cries the old gentleman, you have a pretty juſt opinion of money, my friend, or elſe you are better acquainted with the perſon of the lady, than with her circumſtances. Why pray, what fortune do you imagine this lady to have? What fortune? cries Jones, why too contemptible a one to be named for your ſon. Well, well, well, ſaid the other, perhaps he might have done better. — That I deny, ſaid Jones, for ſhe is one of the beſt of women. Ay, ay, but in point of fortune I mean, — anſwered the other. — And yet, as to that now, how much do you imagine your friend is to have? — How much, cries Jones, how much! — Why, at the utmoſt, perhaps 200 l. Do you mean to banter me, young gentleman? ſaid the father, a little angry. — No, upon my ſoul, anſwered Jones, I am in earneſt; nay, I believe I have gone to the utmoſt farthing. If I do the lady an injury, I aſk her pardon. Indeed you do, cries the father.

I am certain ſhe hath fifty times that ſum, and ſhe ſhall produce fifty to that, before I conſent that ſhe ſhall marry my ſon. Nay, ſaid Jones, it is too late to talk of conſent now. — If ſhe had not fifty farthings, your ſon is married. — My ſon married! anſwered the old gentleman, with ſurpriſe. Nay, ſaid Jones, I thought you was unacquainted with it. — My ſon married to Miſs Harris! anſwered he again. — To Miſs Harris! ſaid Jones; no, Sir, to Miſs Nancy Miller, the daughter of Mrs. Miller, at whoſe houſe he lodged; a young lady, who, though her mother is reduced to let lodgings — Are you bantering, or are you in earneſt? cries the father, with a moſt ſolemn voice. Indeed, Sir, anſwered Jones, I ſcorn the character of a banterer. I came to you in moſt ſerious earneſt, imagining, as I find true, that your ſon had never dared acquaint you with a match ſo much inferior to him in point of fortune, though the reputation of the lady will ſuffer it no longer to remain a ſecret.

While the father ſtood like one ſtruck ſuddenly dumb at this news, a gentleman came into the room, and ſaluted him by the name of brother.

But though theſe two were in conſanguinity ſo nearly related, they were in their diſpoſitions almoſt the oppoſites to each other. The brother who now arrived, had likewiſe been bred to trade, in which he no ſooner ſaw himſelf worth 6000 l. than he

purchaſed a ſmall eſtate with the greateſt part of it, and retired into the country; where he married the daughter of an unbeneficed clergyman; a young lady, who, though ſhe had neither beauty nor fortune, had recommended herſelf to his choice, entirely by her good humour, of which ſhe poſſeſſed a very large ſhare.

With this woman he had, during twenty-five years, lived a life more reſembling the model which certain poets aſcribe to the golden age, than any of thoſe patterns which are furniſhed by the preſent times. By her he had four children; but none of them arrived at maturity, except only one daughter, whom, in vulgar language, he and his wife had ſpoiled; that is, had educated with the utmoſt tenderneſs and fondneſs; which ſhe returned to ſuch a degree, that ſhe had actually refuſed a very extraordinary match with a gentleman a little turned of forty, becauſe ſhe could not bring herſelf to part with her parents.

The young lady whom Mr. Nightingale had intended for his ſon, was a near neighbour of his brother, and an acquaintance of his niece; and in reality it was upon the account of this projected match, that he was now come to town; not indeed to forward, but to diſſuade his brother from a purpoſe which he conceived would inevitably ruin his nephew; for he foreſaw no other event from a union with Miſs Harris, notwithſtanding the largeneſs of her fortune,

as neither her perſon nor mind ſeemed to him to promiſe any kind of matrimonial felicity; for ſhe was very tall, very thin, very ugly, very affected, very ſilly, and very ill-natured.

His brother, therefore, no ſooner mentioned the marriage of his nephew with Miſs Miller, than he expreſt the utmoſt ſatisfaction; and when the father had very bitterly reviled his ſon, and pronounced ſentence of beggary upon him, the uncle began in the following manner:

If you was a little cooler, brother, I would aſk you whether you love your ſon for his ſake, or for your own. You would anſwer, I ſuppoſe, and ſo I ſuppoſe you think, for his ſake; and doubtleſs it is his happineſs which you intended in the marriage you propoſed for him.

Now, brother, to preſcribe rules of happineſs to others, hath always appeared to me very abſurd, and to inſiſt on doing this, very tyrannical. It is a vulgar error, I know; but it is nevertheleſs an error. And if this be abſurd in other things, it is moſtly ſo in the affair of marriage, the happineſs of which depends entirely on the affection which ſubſiſts between the parties.

I have, therefore, always thought it unreaſonable in parents to deſire to chuſe for their children on this occaſion; ſince to force affection is an impoſſible attempt; nay, ſo much doth love abhor force, that I know not whether, through an unfortunate, but

uncurable perverſeneſs in our natures, it may not be even impatient of perſuaſion.

It is, however, true, that though a parent will not, I think, wiſely preſcribe, he ought to be conſulted on this occaſion; and in ſtrictneſs, perhaps, ſhould at leaſt have a negative voice. My nephew, therefore, I own, in marrying without aſking your advice, hath been guilty of a fault. But honeſtly ſpeaking, brother, have you not a little promoted this fault? Have not your frequent declarations on this ſubject, given him a moral certainty of your refuſal, where there was any deficiency in point of fortune? Nay, doth not your preſent anger ariſe ſolely from that deficiency? And if he hath failed in his duty here, did you not as much exceed that authority, when you abſolutely bargained with him for a woman without his knowledge, whom you yourſelf never ſaw, and whom if you had ſeen and known as well as I, it muſt have been madneſs in you, to have ever thought of bringing her into your family?

Still I own my nephew in a fault; but ſurely it is not an unpardonable fault. He hath acted, indeed, without your conſent, in a matter in which he ought to have aſked it; but it is in a matter in which his intereſt is principally concerned; you yourſelf muſt and will acknowledge that you conſulted his intereſt only; and if he unfortunately differed from you, and hath been miſtaken in his notion of happineſs, with you, brother, if you love your ſon,

carry him ſtill wider from the point? Will you increaſe the ill conſequences of his ſimple choice? Will you endeavour to make an event certain miſery to him, which may accidentally prove ſo? In a word, brother, becauſe he hath put it out of your power to make his circumſtances as affluent as you would, will you diſtreſs them as much as you can?

By the force of the true catholic faith, St. Antony won upon the fiſhes. Orpheus and Amphion went a little farther, and by the charms of muſic enchanted things merely inanimate. Wonderful both! But neither hiſtory nor fable have ever yet ventured to record an inſtance of any one, who by force of argument and reaſon hath triumphed over habitual avarice.

Mr. Nightingale, the father, inſtead of attempting to anſwer his brother, contented himſelf with only obſerving, that they had always differed in their ſentiments concerning the education of their children. I wiſh, ſaid he, brother, you would have confined your care to your own daughter, and never have troubled yourſelf with my ſon, who hath, I believe, as little profited by your precepts, as by your example: for young Nightingale was his uncle's god-ſon, and had lived more with him than with his father. So that the uncle had often declared, he loved his nephew almoſt equally with his own child.

Jones fell into raptures with this good gentleman;

and when, after much perſuaſion, they found the father grew ſtill more and more irritated, inſtead of appeaſed, Jones conducted the uncle to his nephew at the houſe of Mrs. Miller.

CHAP. IX.

Containing ſtrange matters.

AT his return to his lodgings, Jones found the ſituation of affairs greatly altered from what they had been in at his departure. The mother, the two daughters, and young Mr. Nightingale, were now ſat down to ſupper together, when the uncle was, at his own deſire, introduced without any ceremony into the company, to all of whom he was well known; for he had ſeveral times viſited his nephew at that houſe.

The old gentleman immediately walked up to Miſs Nancy, ſaluted and wiſhed her joy, as he did afterwards the mother and the other ſiſter; and laſtly, he paid the proper compliments to his nephew, with the ſame good humour and courteſy, as if his nephew had married his equal or ſuperior in fortune, with all the previous requiſites firſt performed.

Miſs Nancy and her ſuppoſed huſband both turned pale, and looked rather fooliſh than otherwiſe upon the occaſion; but Mrs. Miller took the firſt opportunity of withdrawing; and having ſent for Jones into the

dining room, ſhe threw herſelf at his feet, and in a moſt paſſionate flood of tears, called him her good angel, the preſerver of her poor little family, with many other reſpectful and endearing appellations, and made him every aknowledgment which the higheſt benefit can extract from the moſt grateful heart.

After the firſt guſt of her paſſion was a little over, which ſhe declared, if ſhe had not vented, would have burſt her, ſhe proceeded to inform Mr. Jones, that all matters were ſettled between Mr. Nightingale and her daughter, and that they were to be married the next morning: at which Mr. Jones having expreſſed much pleaſure, the poor woman fell again into a fit of joy and thankſgiving, which he at length with difficulty ſilenced, and prevailed on her to return with him back to the company, whom they found in the ſame good humour in which they had left them.

This little ſociety now paſſed two or three very agreeable hours together, in which the uncle, who was a very great lover of his bottle, had ſo well ply'd his nephew, that this latter, though not drunk, began to be ſomewhat fluſtered; and now Mr. Nightingale taking the old gentleman with him up ſtairs into the apartment he had lately occupied, unboſomed himſelf as follows:

As you have been always the beſt and kindeſt of uncles to me, and as you have ſhewn ſuch unparalleled goodneſs in forgiving this match, which to be ſure

may be thought a little improvident; I ſhould never forgive myſelf if I attempted to deceive you in any thing. He then confeſſed the truth, and opened the whole affair.

How, Jack! ſaid the old gentleman, and are you really then not married to this young woman? No, upon my honour, anſwered Nightingale, I have told you the ſimple truth. My dear boy, cries the uncle, kiſſing him, I am heartily glad to hear it. I never was better pleaſed in my life. If you had been married, I ſhould have aſſiſted you as much as was in my power, to have made the beſt of a bad matter; but there is a great difference between conſidering a thing which is already done and irrecoverable, and that which is yet to do. Let your reaſon have fair play, Jack, and you will ſee this match in ſo fooliſh and prepoſterous a light, that there will be no need of any diſſuaſive arguments. How, Sir! replies young Nightingale, is there this difference between having already done an act, and being in honour engaged to do it? Pugh, ſaid the uncle, honour is a creature of the world's making, and the world hath the power of a creator over it, and may govern and direct it as they pleaſe. Now you well know how trivial theſe breaches of contract are thought; even the groſſeſt make but the wonder and converſation of a day. Is there a man who afterwards will be more backward in giving you his ſiſter or daughter? Or is there any ſiſter or daughter who would be more backward to receive you? Honour

is not concerned in theſe engagements. Pardon me, dear Sir, cries Nightingale, I can never think ſo; and not only honour, but conſcience and humanity are concerned. I am well ſatisfied, that was I now to diſappoint the young creature, her death would be the conſequence, and I ſhould look upon myſelf as her murderer; nay, as her murderer by the cruelleſt of all methods, by breaking her heart. Break her heart, indeed! no, no, Jack, cries the uncle, the hearts of women are not ſo ſoon broke; they are tough, boy, they are tough. But, Sir, anſwered Nightingale, my own affections are engaged, and I never could be happy with any other woman. How often have I heard you ſay, that children ſhould be always ſuffered to chuſe for themſelves, and that you would let my couſin Harriet do ſo! Why ay, replied the old gentleman, ſo I would have them; but then I would have them chuſe wiſely. — Indeed, Jack, you muſt, and ſhall leave this girl. — Indeed, uncle, cries the other, I muſt and will have her. You will, young gentleman! ſaid the uncle; I did not expect ſuch a word from you. I ſhould not wonder if you had uſed ſuch language to your father, who hath always treated you like a dog, and kept you at the diſtance which a tyrant preſerves over his ſubjects; but I, who have lived with you upon an equal footing, might ſurely expect better uſage: but I know how to account for it all! It is all owing to your prepoſterous education, in which I have had too little ſhare. There is my daughter now, whom I have

have brought up as my friend, never doth any thing without my advice, nor ever refuſes to take it when I give it her. You have never yet given her advice in an affair of this kind, ſaid Nightingale, for I am greatly miſtaken in my couſin, if ſhe would be very ready to obey even your moſt poſitive commands in abandoning her inclinations. Don't abuſe my girl, anſwered the old gentleman with ſome emotion; don't abuſe my Harriet. I have brought her up to have no inclinations contrary to my own. By ſuffering her to do whatever ſhe pleaſes, I have enured her to a habit of being pleaſed to do whatever I like. Pardon me, Sir, ſaid Nightingale, I have not the leaſt deſign to reflect on my couſin, for whom I have the greateſt eſteem; and indeed I am convinced you will never put her to ſo ſevere a trial, or lay ſuch hard commands on her as you would do on me. — But, dear Sir, let us return to the company; for they will begin to be uneaſy at our long abſence. I muſt beg one favour of my dear uncle, which is, that he would not ſay any thing to ſhock the poor girl or her mother. O you need not fear me, anſwered he, I underſtand myſelf too well to affront women; ſo I will readily grant you that favour; and in return I muſt expect another of you. There are but few of your commands, Sir, ſaid Nightingale, which I ſhall not very chearfully obey. Nay, Sir, I aſk nothing, ſaid the uncle, but the honour of your company home to my lodging, that I may reaſon the caſe a little more fully with you: for I

would, if poſſible, have the ſatisfaction of preſerving my family, notwithſtanding the headſtrong folly of my brother, who, in his own opinion, is the wiſeſt man in the world.

Nightingale, who well knew his uncle to be as headſtrong as his father, ſubmitted to attend him home, and then they both returned back into the room, where the old gentleman promiſed to carry himſelf with the ſame decorum which he had before maintained.

CHAP. X.

A ſhort chapter, which concludes the book.

THE long abſence of the uncle and nephew had occaſioned ſome diſquiet in the minds of all whom they had left behind them; and the more, as during the preceding dialogue, the uncle had more than once elevated his voice, ſo as to be heard down ſtairs; which, though they could not diſtinguiſh what he ſaid, had cauſed ſome evil foreboding in Nancy and her mother, and indeed even in Jones himſelf.

When the good company, therefore, again aſſembled, there was a viſible alteration in all their faces; and the good humour, which, at their laſt meeting, univerſally ſhone forth in every countenance, was now changed into a much leſs agreeable aſpect. It was a change indeed common enough to the weather

in this climate, from ſunſhine to clouds, from june to december.

This alteration was not however greatly remarked by any preſent; for as they were all now endeavouring to conceal their own thoughts, and to act a part, they became all too buſily engaged in the ſcene to be ſpectators of it. Thus neither the uncle nor nephew ſaw any ſymptoms of ſuſpicion in the mother or daughter; nor did the mother or daughter remark the over-acted complaiſance of the old man, nor the counterfeit ſatisfaction which grinned in the features of the young one.

Something like this, I believe, frequently happens, where the whole attention of two friends being engaged in the part which each is to act, in order to impoſe on the other, neither ſees nor ſuſpects the art practiſed againſt himſelf; and thus the thruſt of both (to borrow no improper metaphor on the occaſion) alike takes place.

From the ſame reaſon it is no unuſual thing for both parties to be over-reached in a bargain, though the one muſt be always the greater loſer; as was he who ſold a blind horſe, and received a bad note in payment.

Our company in about half an hour broke up, and the uncle carried off his nephew; but not before the latter had aſſured Miſs Nancy, in a whiſper, that he would attend her early in the morning, and fulfil all his engagements.

Jones, who was the leaſt concerned in this ſcene, ſaw the moſt. He did indeed ſuſpect the very fact; for beſides obſerving the great alteration in the behaviour of the uncle, the diſtance he aſſumed, and his overſtrained civility to Miſs Nancy; the carrying off a bridegroom from his bride at that time of night, was ſo extraordinary a proceeding, that it could be accounted for, only by imagining that young Nightingale had revealed the whole truth, which the apparent openneſs of his temper, and his being fluſtered with liquor, made too probable.

While he was reaſoning with himſelf, whether he ſhould acquaint theſe poor people with his ſuſpicion, the maid of the houſe informed him, that a gentlewoman deſired to ſpeak to him. — He went immediately out, and taking the candle from the maid, uſhered his viſitant up ſtairs, who, in the perſon of Mrs. Honour, acquainted him with ſuch dreadful news concerning his Sophia, that he immediately loſt all conſideration for every other perſon; and his whole ſtock of compaſſion was entirely ſwallowed up in reflections on his own miſery, and on that of his unfortunate angel.

What this dreadful matter was, the reader will be informed, after we have firſt related the many preceding ſteps which produced it, and thoſe will be the ſubject of the following book.

THE HISTORY OF A FOUNDLING.

BOOK XV.

In which the hiſtory advances about two days.

CHAP. I.

Too ſhort to need a preface.

THERE are a ſet of religious, or rather moral writers, who teach that virtue is the certain road to happineſs, and vice to miſery, in this world. A very wholeſome and comfortable doctrine, and to which we have but one objection, namely, that it is not true.

Indeed, if by virtue theſe writers mean the exerciſe of thoſe cardinal virtues, which like good houſe-wives ſtay at home, and mind only the buſineſs of their own family, I ſhall very readily concede the point: for ſo ſurely do all theſe contribute and lead to happineſs,

that I could almoſt wiſh, in violation of all the antient and modern ſages, to call them rather by the name of wiſdom, than by that of virtue; for, with regard to this life, no ſyſtem, I conceive, was ever wiſer than that of the antient Epicureans, who held this wiſdom to conſtitute the chief good; nor fooliſher than that of their oppoſites, thoſe modern epicures, who place all felicity in the abundant gratification of every ſenſual appetite.

But if by virtue is meant (as I almoſt think it ought) a certain relative quality, which is always buſying itſelf without doors, and ſeems as much intereſted in purſuing the good of others as its own; I cannot ſo eaſily agree that this is the ſureſt way to human happineſs; becauſe I am afraid we muſt then include poverty and contempt, with all the miſchiefs which backbiting, envy, and ingratitude, can bring on mankind, in our idea of happineſs; nay, ſometimes, perhaps, we ſhall be obliged to wait upon the ſaid happineſs to a goal; ſince many, by the above virtue, have brought themſelves thither.

I have not now leiſure to enter upon ſo large a field of ſpeculation, as here ſeems opening upon me; my deſign was to wipe off a doctrine that lay in my way; ſince while Mr. Jones was acting the moſt virtuous part imaginable, in labouring to preſerve his fellow-creatures from deſtruction, the devil, or ſome other evil ſpirit, one perhaps clothed in human fleſh, was hard at work to make him completely miſerable in the ruin of his Sophia.

This, therefore, would ſeem an exception to the above rule, if indeed it was a rule; but as we have in our voyage through life ſeen ſo many other exceptions to it, we chuſe to diſpute the doctrine on which it is founded, which we don't apprehend to be chriſtian, which we are convinced is not true, and which is indeed deſtructive of one of the nobleſt arguments that reaſon alone can furniſh for the belief of immortality.

But as the reader's curioſity (if he hath any) muſt be now awake, and hungry, we ſhall provide to feed it as faſt as we can.

CHAP. II.

In which is opened a very black deſign againſt Sophia.

I REMEMBER a wiſe old gentleman, who uſed to ſay, When children are doing nothing, they are doing miſchief. I will not enlarge this quaint ſaying to the moſt beautiful part of the creation in general; but ſo far I may be allowed, that when the effects of female jealouſy do not appear openly in their proper colours of rage and fury, we may ſuſpect that miſchievous paſſion to be at work privately, and attempting to undermine, what it doth not attack above ground.

This was exemplified in the conduct of lady Bellaſton, who, under all the ſmiles which ſhe wore

in her countenance, concealed much indignation againſt Sophia; and as ſhe plainly ſaw, that this young lady ſtood between her and the full indulgence of her deſires, ſhe reſolved to get rid of her by ſome means or other; nor was it long before a very favourable opportunity of accompliſhing this preſented itſelf to her.

The reader may be pleaſed to remember, that when Sophia was thrown into that conſternation at the play-houſe, by the wit and humour of a ſet of young gentlemen who call themſelves the town, we informed him, that ſhe had put herſelf under the protection of a young nobleman, who had very ſafely conducted her to her chair.

This nobleman, who frequently viſited lady Bellaſton, had more than once ſeen Sophia there, ſince her arrival in town, and had conceived a very great liking to her; which liking, as beauty never looks more amiable than in diſtreſs, Sophia had in this fright ſo encreaſed, that he might now, without any great impropriety, be ſaid to be actually in love with her.

It may eaſily be believed, that he would not ſuffer ſo handſome an occaſion of improving his acquaintance with the beloved object, as now offered itſelf, to elapſe, when even good-breeding alone might have prompted him to pay her a viſit.

The next morning, therefore, after this accident, he waited on Sophia, with the uſual compliments,

and hopes that ſhe had received no harm from her laſt night's adventure.

As love, like fire, when once thoroughly kindled, is ſoon blown into a flame; Sophia in a very ſhort time compleated her conqueſt. Time now flew away unperceived, and the noble lord had been two hours in company with the lady, before it entered into his head that he had made too long a viſit. Though this circumſtance alone would have alarmed Sophia, who was ſomewhat more a miſtreſs of computation at preſent; ſhe had indeed much more pregnant evidence from the eyes of her lover of what paſt within his boſom; nay, though he did not make any open declaration of his paſſion, yet many of his expreſſions were rather too warm, and too tender, to have been imputed to complaiſance, even in the age when ſuch complaiſance was in faſhion; the very reverſe of which is well known to be the reigning mode at preſent.

Lady Bellaſton had been appriſed of his lordſhip's viſit at his firſt arrival; and the length of it very well ſatisfied her, that things went as ſhe wiſhed, and as indeed ſhe had ſuſpected the ſecond time ſhe ſaw this young couple together. This buſineſs ſhe rightly, I think, concluded, that ſhe ſhould by no means forward by mixing in the company while they were together; ſhe, therefore, ordered her ſervants, that when my lord was going, they ſhould tell him, ſhe deſired to ſpeak with him; and employed

the intermediate time in meditating how beſt to accompliſh a ſcheme which ſhe made no doubt but his lordſhip would very readily embrace the execution of.

Lord Fellamar (for that was the title of this young nobleman) was no ſooner introduced to her ladyſhip, than ſhe attacked him in the following ſtrain: Bleſs me, my lord, are you here yet? I thought my ſervants had made a miſtake, and let you go away; and I wanted to ſee you about an affair of ſome importance. — Indeed, lady Bellaſton, ſaid he, I don't wonder you are aſtoniſhed at the length of my viſit: for I have ſtaid above two hours, and I did not think I had ſtaid above half a one. — What am I to conclude from thence, my lord? ſaid ſhe. The company muſt be very agreeable, which can make time ſlide away ſo very deceitfully. — Upon my honour, ſaid he, the moſt agreeable I ever ſaw. Pray, tell me, lady Bellaſton, who is this blazing ſtar which you have produced among us all of a ſudden? — What blazing ſtar, my lord? ſaid ſhe, affecting a ſurpriſe. I mean, ſaid he, the lady I ſaw here the other day, whom I had laſt night in my arms at the play-houſe, and to whom I have been making that unreaſonable viſit. — O, my couſin Weſtern! ſaid ſhe: why that blazing ſtar, my lord, is the daughter of a country booby 'ſquire, and hath been in town about a fortnight, for the firſt time. — Upon my ſoul, ſaid

he, I ſhould ſwear ſhe had been bred up in a court; for beſides her beauty, I never ſaw any thing ſo genteel, ſo ſenſible, ſo polite. — O brave! cries the lady, my couſin hath you, I find. — Upon my honour, anſwered he, I wiſh ſhe had: for I am in love with her to diſtraction. — Nay, my lord, ſaid ſhe, it is not wiſhing yourſelf very ill neither, for ſhe is a very great fortune: I aſſure you ſhe is an only child, and her father's eſtate is a good 3000 l. a year. Then I can aſſure you, Madam, anſwered the lord, I think her the beſt match in England. Indeed, my lord, replied ſhe, if you like her, I heartily wiſh you had her. If you think ſo kindly of me, Madam, ſaid he, as ſhe is a relation of yours, will you do me the honour to propoſe it to her father? And are you really then in earneſt? cries the lady, with an affected gravity. I hope, Madam, anſwered he, you have a better opinion of me, than to imagine I would jeſt with your ladyſhip in an affair of this kind. Indeed then, ſaid the lady, I will moſt readily propoſe your lordſhip to her father; and I can, I believe, aſſure you of his joyful acceptance of the propoſal; but there is a bar, which I am almoſt aſhamed to mention; and yet it is one you will never be able to conquer. You have a rival, my lord, and a rival who, though I bluſh to name him, neither you, nor all the world, will ever be able to conquer. Upon my word, lady Bellaſton, cries he, you have ſtruck a damp to my

heart, which hath almoſt deprived me of being. Fie! my lord, ſaid ſhe; I ſhould rather hope I had ſtruck fire into you. A lover, and talk of damps in your heart! I rather imagined you would have aſked your rival's name, that you might have immediately entered the liſts with him. I promiſe you, Madam, anſwered he, there are very few things I would not undertake for your charming couſin: but pray, who is this happy man? — Why he is, ſaid ſhe, what I am ſorry to ſay moſt happy men with us are, one of the loweſt fellows in the world. He is a beggar, a baſtard, a foundling, a fellow in meaner circumſtances than one of your lordſhip's footmen. And is it poſſible, cried he, that a young creature with ſuch perfections, ſhould think of beſtowing herſelf ſo unworthily? Alas! my lord, anſwered ſhe, conſider the country — the bane of all young women is the country. There they learn a ſet of romantic notions of love, and I know not what folly, which this town and good company can ſcarce eradicate in a whole winter. Indeed, Madam, replied my lord, your couſin is of too immenſe a value to be thrown away: ſuch ruin as this muſt be prevented. Alas! cries ſhe, my lord, how can it be prevented? The family have already done all in their power; but the girl is, I think, intoxicated, and nothing leſs than ruin will content her. And to deal more openly with you, I expect every day to hear ſhe is run away with him. What you tell me, lady Bellaſton, anſwered his

lordſhip, affects me moſt tenderly, and only raiſes my compaſſion inſtead of leſſening my adoration of your couſin. Some means muſt be found to preſerve ſo ineſtimable a jewel. Hath your ladyſhip endeavoured to reaſon with her? Here the lady affected a laugh, and cried: My dear lord, ſure you know us better than to talk of reaſoning a young woman out of her inclinations? Theſe ineſtimable jewels are as deaf as the jewels they wear: time, my lord, time is the only medicine to cure their folly; but this is a medicine, which I am certain ſhe will not take; nay, I live in hourly horrors on her account. In ſhort, nothing but violent methods will do. What is to be done? cries my lord. What methods are to be taken? — Is there any method upon earth? — Oh! lady Bellaſton! there is nothing which I would not undertake for ſuch a reward. — I really know not, anſwered the lady, after a pauſe; and then pauſing again, ſhe cried out: — Upon my ſoul, I am at my wit's end on this girl's account. — If ſhe can be preſerved, ſomething muſt be done immediately; and, as I ſay, nothing but violent methods will do. — If your lordſhip hath really this attachment to my couſin, (and to do her juſtice, except in this ſilly inclination, of which ſhe will ſoon ſee her folly, ſhe is every way deſerving) I think there may be one way, indeed it is a very diſagreable one, and what I am almoſt afraid to think of. — It requires great ſpirit, I promiſe you. I am not conſcious, Madam,

ſaid he, of any defect there; nor am I, I hope, ſuſpected of any ſuch. It muſt be an egregious defect indeed, which could make me backward on this occaſion. Nay, my lord, anſwered ſhe, I am ſo far from doubting you. I am much more inclined to doubt my own courage; for I muſt run a monſtrous riſque. In ſhort, I muſt place ſuch a confidence in your honour, as a wiſe woman will ſcarce ever place in a man on any conſideration. In this point likewiſe my lord very well ſatisfied her; for his reputation was extremely clear, and common fame did him no more than juſtice, in ſpeaking well of him. Well then, ſaid ſhe, my lord, — I — I vow, I can't bear the apprehenſion of it. — No, it muſt not be. — At leaſt every other method ſhall be tried. Can you get rid of your engagements, and dine here to-day? Your lordſhip will have an opportunity of ſeeing a little more of Miſs Weſtern. — I promiſe you we have no time to loſe. Here will be nobody but lady Betty, and miſs Eagle, and colonel Hamſtead, and Tom Edwards; they will all go ſoon, — and I ſhall be at home to nobody. Then your lordſhip may be a little more explicit. Nay, I will contrive ſome method to convince you of her attachment to this fellow. My lord made proper compliments, accepted the invitation, and then they parted to dreſs, it being now paſt three in the morning, or to reckon by the old ſtyle, in the afternoon.

CHAP. III.

A further explanation of the foregoing deſign.

THOUGH the reader may have long ſince concluded lady Bellaſton to be a member (and no inconſiderable one) of the great world, ſhe was in reality a very conſiderable member of the little world; by which appellation was diſtinguiſhed a very worthy and honourable ſociety which not long ſince flouriſhed in this kingdom.

Among other good principles upon which this ſociety was founded, there was one very remarkable: for as it was a rule of an honourable club of heroes, who aſſembled at the cloſe of the late war, that all the members ſhould every day fight once at leaſt; ſo 'twas in this, that every member ſhould, within the twenty four hours, tell at leaſt one merry fib, which was to be propagated by all the brethren and ſiſterhood.

Many idle ſtories were told about this ſociety, which from a certain quality may be, perhaps not unjuſtly, ſuppoſed to have come from the ſociety themſelves. As, that the devil was the preſident; and that he ſat in perſon in an elbow-chair at the upper end of the table: but upon very ſtrict enquiry, I find there is not the leaſt truth in any of thoſe

tales, and that the aſſembly conſiſted in reality of a ſet of very good ſort of people, and the fibs which they propagated were of a harmleſs kind, and tended only to produce mirth and good humour.

Edwards was likewiſe a member of this comical ſociety. To him, therefore, lady Bellaſton applied as a proper inſtrument for her purpoſe, and furniſhed him with a fib, which he was to vent whenever the lady gave him her cue; and this was not to be till the evening, when all the company but lord Fellamar and himſelf were gone, and while they were engaged in a rubbers at whiſt.

To this time then, which was between ſeven and eight in the evening, we will convey our reader; when lady Bellaſton, lord Fellamar, Miſs Weſtern, and Tom, being engaged at whiſt, and in the laſt game of their rubbers, Tom received his cue from lady Bellaſton, which was: I proteſt, Tom, you are grown intolerable lately; you uſed to tell us all the news of the town, and now you know no more of the world than if you lived out of it.

Mr. Edwards then began as follows: The fault is not mine, Madam; it lies in the dulneſs of the age, that doth nothing worth talking of. — O la! though now I think on't, there hath a terrible accident befallen poor colonel Wilcox. — Poor Ned. — You know him, my lord, every body knows him; faith! I am very much concerned for him.

What

What is it, pray? ſays lady Bellaſton.

Why, he hath killed a man this morning in a duel, that's all.

His lordſhip, who was not in the ſecret, aſked gravely, whom he had killed? To which Edwards anſwered: A young fellow we none of us know; a Somerſetſhire lad juſt come to town, one Jones his name is; a near relation to one Mr. Allworthy, of whom your lordſhip, I believe, hath heard. I ſaw the lad lie dead in a coffee-houſe. — Upon my ſoul, he is one of the fineſt corpſes I ever ſaw in my life.

Sophia, who had juſt begun to deal as Tom had mentioned that a man was killed, ſtopt her hand, and liſtened with attention, (for all ſtories of that kind affected her) but no ſooner had he arrived at the latter part of the ſtory, than ſhe began to deal again; and having dealt three cards to one, and ſeven to another, and ten to a third, at laſt dropt the reſt from her hand, and fell back in her chair.

The company behaved as uſually on theſe occaſions. The uſual diſturbance enſued, the uſual aſſiſtance was ſummoned, and Sophia at laſt, as it is uſual, returned again to life, and ſoon after was, at her earneſt deſire, led to her own apartment; where, at my lord's requeſt, lady Bellaſton acquainted her with the truth, attempted to carry it off as a jeſt of her own, and comforted her with repeated

aſſurances, that neither his lordſhip, nor Tom, though ſhe had taught him the ſtory, were in the true ſecret of the affair.

There was no farther evidence neceſſary to convince lord Fellamar how juſtly the caſe had been repreſented to him by lady Bellaſton; and now at her return into the room, a ſcheme was laid between theſe two noble perſons, which, though it appeared in no very heinous light to his lordſhip, (as he faithfully promiſed, and faithfully reſolved too, to make the lady all the ſubſequent amends in his power by marriage;) yet many of our readers, we doubt not, will ſee with juſt deteſtation.

The next evening at ſeven was appointed for the fatal purpoſe, when lady Bellaſton undertook that Sophia ſhould be alone, and his lordſhip ſhould be introduced to her. The whole family were to be regulated for the purpoſe, moſt of the ſervants diſpatched out of the houſe; and for Mrs. Honour, who, to prevent ſuſpicion, was to be left with her miſtreſs till his lordſhip's arrival, lady Bellaſton herſelf was to engage her in an apartment as diſtant as poſſible from the ſcene of the intended miſchief, and out of the hearing of Sophia.

Matters being thus agreed on, his lordſhip took his leave, and her ladyſhip retired to reſt, highly pleaſed with a project, of which ſhe had no reaſon to doubt the ſucceſs, and which promiſed ſo effectually to remove Sophia from being any future

obſtruction to her amour with Jones, by a means of which ſhe ſhould never appear to be guilty, even if the fact appeared to the world; but this ſhe made no doubt of preventing by huddling up a marriage, to which ſhe thought the raviſhed Sophia would eaſily be brought to conſent, and at which all the reſt of her family would rejoice.

But affairs were not in ſo quiet a ſituation in the boſom of the other conſpirator: his mind was toſt in all the diſtracting anxiety ſo nobly deſcribed by Shakeſpear.

> Between the acting of a dreadful thing,
> And the firſt motion, all the interim is
> Like a phantaſma, or a hideous dream:
> The genius and the mortal inſtruments
> Are then in council; and the ſtate of man,
> Like to a little kingdom, ſuffers then
> The nature of an inſurrection. ——

Though the violence of his paſſion had made him eagerly embrace the firſt hint of this deſign, eſpecially as it came from a relation of the lady, yet when that friend to reflection, a pillow, had placed the action itſelf in all its natural black colours before his eyes, with all the conſequences which muſt, and thoſe which might probably attend it; his reſolution began to abate, or rather indeed to go over to the other ſide; and after a long conflict which laſted a whole night between honour and appetite, the

former at length prevailed, and he determined to wait on lady Bellaſton, and to relinquiſh the deſign.

Lady Bellaſton was in bed, though very late in the morning, and Sophia ſitting by her bedſide, when the ſervant acquainted her that lord Fellamar was below in the parlour; upon which her ladyſhip deſired him to ſtay, and that ſhe would ſee him preſently; but the ſervant was no ſooner departed than poor Sophia began to intreat her couſin not to encourage the viſits of that odious lord (ſo ſhe called him, though a little unjuſtly) upon her account. I ſee his deſign, ſaid ſhe; for he made downright love to me yeſterday morning; but as I am reſolved never to admit it, I beg your ladyſhip not to leave us alone together any more, and to order the ſervants, that, if he enquires for me, I may be always denied to him.

La! child, ſays lady Bellaſton, you country girls have nothing but ſweet-hearts in your heads; you fancy every man who is civil to you is making love. He is one of the moſt gallant young fellows about town, and I am convinced means no more than a little gallantry. Make love to you indeed! I wiſh with all my heart he would, and you muſt be an arrant mad woman to refuſe him.

But as I ſhall certainly be that mad woman, cries Sophia, I hope his viſits ſhall not be intruded upon me.

O child, ſaid lady Bellaſton, you need not be ſo fearful; if you reſolve to run away with that Jones, I know no perſon who can hinder you.

Upon my honour, Madam, cries Sophia, your ladyſhip injures me. I will never run away with any man; nor will I ever marry contrary to my father's inclinations.

Well, Miſs Weſtern, ſaid the lady, if you are not in a humour to ſee company this morning, you may retire to your own apartment; for I am not frightened at his lordſhip, and muſt ſend for him up into my dreſſing-room.

Sophia thanked her ladyſhip, and withdrew; and preſently afterwards Fellamar was admitted up ſtairs.

CHAP. IV.

By which it will appear how dangerous an advocate a lady is, when ſhe applies her eloquence to an ill purpoſe.

When lady Bellaſton heard the young lord's ſcruples, ſhe treated them with the ſame diſdain with which one of thoſe ſages of the law, called Newgate ſolicitors, treats the qualms of conſcience in a young witneſs. My dear lord, ſaid ſhe, you certainly want a cordial. I muſt ſend to lady Edgely for

one of her beſt drams. Fie upon it! have more reſolution. Are you frightened by the word rape? Or are you apprehenſive? — Well! if the ſtory of Helen was modern, I ſhould think it unnatural. I mean the behaviour of Paris, not the fondneſs of the lady; for all women love a man of ſpirit. There is another ſtory of the Sabine ladies, — and that too, I thank heaven, is very ancient. Your lordſhip, perhaps, will admire my reading; but I think Mr. Hooke tells us, they made tolerable good wives afterwards. I fancy few of my married acquaintance were raviſhed by their huſbands. Nay, dear lady Bellaſton, cried he, don't ridicule me in this manner. Why, my good lord, anſwered ſhe, do you think any woman in England would not laugh at you in her heart, whatever prudery ſhe might wear in her countenance? — You force me to uſe a ſtrange kind of language, and to betray my ſex moſt abominably: but I am contented with knowing my intentions are good, and that I am endeavouring to ſerve my couſin; for I think you will make her a good huſband notwithſtanding this; or, upon my ſoul, I would not even perſuade her to fling herſelf away upon an empty title. She ſhould not upbraid me hereafter with having loſt a man of ſpirit; for that his enemies allow this poor young fellow to be.

Let thoſe who have had the ſatisfaction of hearing reflections of this kind from a wife or a miſtreſs, declare whether they are at all ſweetened by coming

from a female tongue. Certain it is, they ſunk deeper into his lordſhip than any thing which Demoſthenes or Cicero could have ſaid on the occaſion.

Lady Bellaſton, perceiving ſhe had fired the young lord's pride, began now, like a true orator, to rouſe other paſſions to its aſſiſtance. My lord, ſays ſhe, in a graver voice, you will be pleaſed to remember, you mentioned this matter to me firſt; for I would not appear to you in the light of one who is endeavouring to put off my couſin upon you. Fourſcore thouſand pounds do not ſtand in need of an advocate to recommend them. Nor doth Miſs Weſtern, ſaid he, require any recommendation from her fortune; for, in my opinion, no woman ever had half her charms. Yes, yes, my lord, replied the lady, looking in the glaſs; there have been women with more than half her charms, I aſſure you; not that I need leſſen her on that account: ſhe is a moſt delicious girl, that's certain; and within theſe few hours ſhe will be in the arms of one, who ſurely doth not deſerve her, though I will give him his due, I believe he is truly a man of ſpirit.

I hope ſo, Madam, ſaid my lord; though I muſt own he doth not deſerve her; for unleſs heaven, or your ladyſhip diſappoint me, ſhe ſhall within that time be in mine.

Well ſpoken, my lord, anſwered the lady, I promiſe you no diſappointment ſhall happen from my ſide;

and within this week I am convinced I ſhall call your lordſhip my couſin in public.

The remainder of this ſcene conſiſted entirely of raptures, excuſes, and compliments, very pleaſant to have heard from the parties; but rather dull when related at ſecond hand. Here, therefore, we ſhall put an end to this dialogue, and haſten to the fatal hour, when every thing was prepared for the deſtruction of poor Sophia.

But this being the moſt tragical matter in our whole hiſtory, we ſhall treat it in a chapter by itſelf.

CHAP. V.

Containing ſome matters which may affect, and others which may ſurpriſe the reader.

THE clock had now ſtruck ſeven, and poor Sophia, alone and melancholy, ſat reading a tragedy. It was the Fatal Marriage; and ſhe was now come to that part where the poor diſtreſt Iſabella diſpoſes of her wedding-ring.

Here the book dropt from her hand, and a ſhower of tears ran down into her boſom. In this ſituation ſhe had continued a minute, when the door opened, and in came lord Fellamar. Sophia ſtarted from her chair at his entrance; and his lordſhip advancing forwards, and making a low bow, ſaid: I am afraid,

Miſs Weſtern, I break in upon you abruptly. Indeed, my lord, ſays ſhe, I muſt own myſelf a little ſurpriſed at this unexpected viſit. If this viſit be unexpected, Madam, anſwered lord Fellamar, my eyes muſt have been very faithleſs interpreters of my heart, when laſt I had the honour of ſeeing you: for ſurely you could not otherwiſe have hoped to detain my heart in your poſſeſſion, without receiving a viſit from its owner. Sophia, confuſed as ſhe was, anſwered this bombaſt (and very properly, I think) with a look of inconceivable diſdain. My lord then made another and a longer ſpeech of the ſame ſort. Upon which Sophia, trembling, ſaid: Am I really to conceive your lordſhip to be out of your ſenſes? Sure, my lord, there is no other excuſe for ſuch behaviour. — I am, indeed, Madam, in the ſituation you ſuppoſe, cries his lordſhip; and ſure you will pardon the effects of a frenzy which you yourſelf have occaſioned: for love hath ſo totally deprived me of reaſon, that I am ſcarce accountable for any of my actions. Upon my word, my lord, ſaid Sophia, I neither underſtand your words nor your behaviour. — Suffer me then, Madam, cries he, at your feet to explain both, by laying open my ſoul to you, and declaring, that I doat on you to the higheſt degree of diſtraction. O moſt adorable, moſt divine creature! what language can expreſs the ſentiments of my heart! I do aſſure you, my lord, ſaid Sophia, I ſhall not ſtay to hear any more of this. Do not, cries he, think of leaving me thus cruelly: could you know half the

torments which I feel, that tender boſom muſt pity what thoſe eyes have cauſed. Then fetching a deep ſigh, and laying hold of her hand, he ran on for ſome minutes in a ſtrain which would be little more pleaſing to the reader than it was to the lady; and at laſt concluded with a declaration, that, if he was maſter of the world, he would lay it at her feet. Sophia then forcibly pulling away her hand from his, anſwered with much ſpirit: I promiſe you, Sir, your world and its maſter, I ſhould ſpurn from me with equal contempt. She then offered to go, and lord Fellamar again laying hold of her hand, ſaid: Pardon me, my beloved angel, freedoms which nothing but deſpair could have tempted me to take. — Believe me, could I have had any hope that my title and fortune, neither of them inconſiderable, unleſs when compared with your worth, would have been accepted, I had, in the humbleſt manner, preſented them to your acceptance. — But I cannot loſe you. — By heaven, I will ſooner part with my ſoul. — You are, you muſt, you ſhall be only mine. My lord, ſays ſhe, I intreat you to deſiſt from a vain purſuit; for, upon my honour, I will never hear you on this ſubject. Let go my hand, my lord; for I am reſolved to go from you this moment; nor will I ever ſee you more. Then, Madam, cries his lordſhip, I muſt make the beſt uſe of this moment; for I cannot, nor will I live without you. — What do you mean, my lord? ſaid Sophia; I will raiſe the family. I have no fear, Madam, anſwered he, but of loſing you, and

that I am reſolved to prevent, the only way which deſpair points to me. — He then caught her in his arms: upon which ſhe ſcreamed ſo loud, that ſhe muſt have alarmed ſome one to her aſſiſtance, had not lady Bellaſton taken care to remove all ears.

But a more lucky circumſtance happened for poor Sophia: another noiſe now broke forth, which almoſt drowned her cries; for now the whole houſe rang with: Where is ſhe? D—n me, I'll unkennel her this inſtant. Shew me her chamber, I ſay. Where is my daughter? I know ſhe's in the houſe, and I'll ſee her if ſhe's above ground. Shew me where ſhe is. — At which laſt words the door flew open, and in came 'ſquire Weſtern, with his parſon, and a ſet of myrmidons at his heels.

How miſerable muſt have been the condition of poor Sophia, when the enraged voice of her father was welcome to her ears! Welcome indeed it was, and luckily did he come; for it was the only accident upon earth which could have preſerved the peace of her mind from being for ever deſtroyed.

Sophia, notwithſtanding her fright, preſently knew her father's voice; and his lordſhip, notwithſtanding his paſſion, knew the voice of reaſon, which peremptorily aſſured him, it was not now a time for the perpetration of his villainy. Hearing, therefore, the voice approach, and hearing likewiſe whoſe it was; (for as the 'ſquire more than once roared forth the word daughter, ſo Sophia, in the midſt of her ſtruggling,

cried out upon her father;) he thought proper to relinquish his prey, having only disordered her handkerchief, and with his rude lips committed violence on her lovely neck.

If the reader's imagination doth not assist me, I shall never be able to describe the situation of these two persons when Western came into the room. Sophia tottered into her chair, where she sat disordered, pale, breathless, bursting with indignation at lord Fellamar; affrighted, and yet more rejoiced at the arrival of her father.

His lordship sat down near her, with the bag of his wig hanging over one of his shoulders, the rest of his dress being somewhat disordered, and rather a greater proportion of linen than is usual appearing at his bosom. As to the rest, he was amazed, affrighted, vexed, and ashamed.

As to 'squire Western, he happened, at this time, to be overtaken by an enemy, which very frequently pursues, and seldom fails to overtake most of the country gentlemen of this kingdom. He was, literally speaking, drunk; which circumstance, together with his natural impetuosity, could produce no other effect, than his running immediately up to his daughter, upon whom he fell foul with his tongue in the most inveterate manner; nay, he had probably committed violence with his hands, had not the parson interposed, saying: For heaven's sake, Sir, animadvert that you are in the house of a great lady. Let me beg you to mitigate

your wrath; it ſhould miniſter a fullneſs of ſatisfaction that you have found your daughter; for as to revenge, it belongeth not unto us. I diſcern great contrition in the countenance of the young lady. I ſtand aſſured, if you will forgive her, ſhe will repent her for all paſt offences, and return unto her duty.

The ſtrength of the parſon's arms had at firſt been of more ſervice than the ſtrength of his rhetoric. However, his laſt words wrought ſome effect, and the 'ſquire anſwered: I'll forgee her if ſhe will ha un. If wot ha un, Sophy, I'll forgee thee all. Why doſt unt ſpeak? Shat ha un? D—n me, ſhat ha un? Why doſt unt anſwer? Was ever ſuch a ſtubborn tuoad?

Let me intreat you, Sir, to be a little more moderate, ſaid the parſon; you frighten the young lady ſo, that you deprive her of all power of utterance. Power of mine a—, anſwered the 'ſquire. You take her part then, you do? A pretty parſon truly, to ſide with an undutiful child. Yes, yes, I will gee you a living with a pox. I'll gee un to the devil ſooner.

I humbly crave your pardon, ſaid the parſon; I aſſure your worſhip, I meant no ſuch matter.

My lady Bellaſton now entered the room, and came up to the 'ſquire, who no ſooner ſaw her, than reſolving to follow the inſtructions of his ſiſter, he made her a very civil bow, in the rural manner, and paid her ſome of his beſt compliments. He then immediately proceeded to his complaints, and ſaid: There, my lady couſin; there ſtands the moſt undutiful child in

the world: ſhe hankers after a beggarly raſcal, and won't marry one of the greateſt matches in all England, that we have provided for her.

Indeed, couſin Weſtern, anſwered the lady, I am perſuaded you wrong my couſin. I am ſure ſhe hath a better underſtanding. I am convinced ſhe will not refuſe what ſhe muſt be ſenſible is ſo much to her advantage.

This was a wilful miſtake in lady Bellaſton; for ſhe well knew whom Mr. Weſtern meant; though perhaps ſhe thought he would eaſily be reconciled to his lordſhip's propoſals.

Do you hear there, quoth the 'ſquire, what her ladyſhip ſays? All your family are for the match. Come, Sophy, be a good girl, and be dutiful, and make your father happy.

If my death will make you happy, Sir, anſwered Sophia, you will ſhortly be ſo.

It's a lye, Sophy; it's a d—n'd lye, and you know it, ſaid the 'ſquire.

Indeed, Miſs Weſtern, ſaid lady Bellaſton, you injure your father; he hath nothing in view but your intereſt in this match; and I and all your friends muſt acknowledge the higheſt honour done to your family in the propoſal.

Ay, all of us, quoth the 'ſquire; nay, it was no propoſal of mine. She knows it was her aunt propoſed it to me firſt. — Come, Sophy, once more let me beg you to be a good girl, and gee me your conſent before your couſin.

Let me give him your hand, couſin, ſaid the lady. It is the faſhion now a-days to diſpenſe with time and long courtſhips.

Pugh, ſaid the 'ſquire, what ſignifies time? won't they have time enough to court afterwards? People may court very well after they have been a bed together.

As lord Fellamar was very well aſſured, that he was meant by lady Bellaſton, ſo never having heard nor ſuſpected a word of Blifil, he made no doubt of his being meant by the father. Coming up therefore to the 'ſquire, he ſaid: Though I have not the honour, Sir, of being perſonally known to you; yet, as I find I have the happineſs to have my propoſals accepted, let me intercede, Sir, in behalf of the young lady, that ſhe may not be more ſolicited at this time.

You intercede, Sir! ſaid the 'ſquire, why, who the devil are you?

Sir, I am lord Fellamar, anſwered he, and am the happy man, whom I hope you have done the honour of accepting for a ſon in-law.

You are a ſon of a b—, replied the 'ſquire, for all your laced coat. You my ſon-in-law, and be d—n'd to you!

I ſhall take more from you, Sir, than from any man, anſwered the lord; but I muſt inform you, that I am not uſed to hear ſuch language without reſentment.

Reſent my a—, quoth the 'ſquire. Don't think I am afraid of ſuch a fellow as thee art! becauſe haſt a

got a ſpit there dangling at thy ſide. Lay by your ſpit, and I'll gee thee enough of meddling with what doth not belong to thee. — I'll teach you to father in-law me. I'll lick thy jacket.

It's very well, Sir, ſaid my lord; I ſhall make no diſturbance before the ladies. I am very well ſatisfied. Your humble ſervant, Sir; lady Bellaſton, your moſt obedient.

His lordſhip was no ſooner gone, than lady Bellaſton coming up to Mr. Weſtern, ſaid: Bleſs me, Sir, what have you done? You know not whom you have affronted; he is a nobleman of the firſt rank and fortune, and yeſterday made propoſals to your daughter; and ſuch as I am ſure you muſt accept with the higheſt pleaſure.

Anſwer for yourſelf, lady couſin, ſaid the 'ſquire, I will have nothing to do with any of your lords. My daughter ſhall have an honeſt country gentleman; I have pitched upon one for her, — and ſhe ſhall ha' un. — I am ſorry for the trouble ſhe hath given your ladyſhip with all my heart. Lady Bellaſton made a civil ſpeech upon the word trouble, to which the 'ſquire anſwered: Why that's kind, — and I would do as much for your ladyſhip. To be ſure relations ſhould do for one another. So I wiſh your ladyſhip a good night. — Come, Madam, you muſt go along with me by fair means, or I'll have you carried down to the coach.

Sophia ſaid, ſhe would attend him without force; but

but begged to go in a chair, for ſhe ſaid ſhe ſhould not be able to ride any other way.

Prithee, cries the 'ſquire, wout unt perſuade me can'ſt not ride in a coach, would'ſt? That's a pretty thing ſurely. No, no, I'll never let thee out of my ſight any more till art married, that I promiſe thee. Sophia told him, ſhe ſaw he was reſolved to break her heart. O break thy heart and be d—n'd, quoth he, if a good huſband will break it. I don't value a braſs varden, not a hapenny of any undutiful b— upon earth. He then took violently hold of her hand; upon which the parſon once more interfered, begging him to uſe gentle methods. At that the 'ſquire thundered out a curſe, and bid the parſon hold his tongue, ſaying: At'n't in pulpit now? when art a got up there I never mind what doſt ſay; but I won't be prieſt-ridden, nor taught how to behave myſelf by thee. I wiſh your ladyſhip a good-night. Come along, Sophy; be a good girl, and all ſhall be well. Shat ha un, d—n me, ſhat ha un.

Mrs. Honour appeared below ſtairs, and with a low courteſy to the 'ſquire, offered to attend her miſtreſs; but he puſhed her away, ſaying: Hold, Madam, hold, you come no more near my houſe. And will you take my maid away from me? ſaid Sophia. Yes, indeed, Madam, will I, cries the 'ſquire: you need not fear being without a ſervant; I will get you another maid, and a better maid than this, who, I'd lay five pound to a crown, is no more a maid than my Grannum. No,

no, Sophy, ſhe ſhall contrive no more eſcapes, I promiſe you. He then packed up his daughter and the parſon into a hackney-coach, after which he mounted himſelf, and ordered it to drive to his lodgings. In the way thither he ſuffered Sophia to be quiet, and entertained himſelf with reading a lecture to the parſon on good manners, and a proper behaviour to his betters.

It is poſſible he might not ſo eaſily have carried off his daughter from lady Bellaſton, had that good lady deſired to have detained her; but in reality, ſhe was not a little pleaſed with the confinement into which Sophia was going: and as her project with lord Fellamar had failed of ſucceſs, ſhe was well contented that other violent methods were now going to be uſed in favour of another man.

CHAP. VI.

By what means the 'ſquire came to diſcover his daughter.

THOUGH the reader in many hiſtories is obliged to digeſt much more unaccountable appearances than this of Mr. Weſtern, without any ſatisfaction at all; yet, as we dearly love to oblige him whenever it is in our power, we ſhall now proceed to ſhew by what method the 'ſquire diſcovered where his daughter was.

In the third chapter then of the preceding book, we gave a hint (for it is not our cuſtom to unfold at

any time more than is neceſſary for the occaſion) that Mrs. Fitzpatrick, who was very deſirous of reconciling herſelf to her uncle and aunt Weſtern, thought ſhe had a probable opportunity, by the ſervice of preſerving Sophia from committing the ſame crime which had drawn on herſelf the anger of her family. After much deliberation therefore ſhe reſolved to inform her aunt Weſtern where her couſin was, and accordingly ſhe writ the following letter, which we ſhall give the reader at length, for more reaſons than one.

Honoured Madam,

The occaſion of my writing this will perhaps make a letter of mine agreable to my dear aunt, for the ſake of one of her nieces, though I have little reaſon to hope it will be ſo on the account of another.

Without more apology, as I was coming to throw my unhappy ſelf at your feet, I met, by the ſtrangeſt accident in the world, my couſin Sophy, whoſe hiſtory you are better acquainted with than myſelf, though, alas! I know infinitely too much; enough indeed to ſatisfy me, that unleſs ſhe is immediately prevented ſhe is in danger of running into the ſame fatal miſchief, which, by fooliſhly and ignorantly refuſing your moſt wiſe and prudent advice, I have unfortunately brought on myſelf.

In ſhort, I have ſeen the man, nay, I was moſt part of yeſterday in his company, and a charming young

fellow I promiſe you he is. By what accident he came acquainted with me is too tedious to tell you now; but I have this morning changed my lodgings to avoid him, leſt he ſhould by my means diſcover my couſin; for he doth not yet know where ſhe is, and it is adviſable he ſhould not, till my uncle hath ſecured her.—No time therefore is to be loſt; and I need only inform you, that ſhe is now with lady Bellaſton, whom I have ſeen, and who hath, I find, a deſign of concealing her from her family. You know, Madam, ſhe is a ſtrange woman; but nothing could miſbecome me more, than to preſume to give any hint to one of your great underſtanding, and great knowledge of the world, beſides barely informing you of the matter of fact.

I hope, Madam, the care which I have ſhewn on this occaſion for the good of my family, will recommend me again to the favour of a lady who hath always exerted ſo much zeal for the honour and true intereſt of us all; and that it may be a means of reſtoring me to your friendſhip, which hath made ſo great a part of my former, and is ſo neceſſary to my future, happineſs. I am,

With the utmoſt reſpect,
honoured Madam,
your moſt dutiful obliged niece,
and moſt obedient
humble ſervant,

HARRIET FITZPATRICK.

Mrs. Weſtern was now at her brother's houſe, where ſhe had reſided ever ſince the flight of Sophia, in order to adminiſter comfort to the poor 'ſquire in his affliction. Of this comfort, which ſhe doled out to him in daily portions, we have formerly given a ſpecimen.

She was now ſtanding with her back to the fire, and, with a pinch of ſnuff in her hand, was dealing forth this daily allowance of comfort to the 'ſquire, while he ſmoaked his afternoon pipe, when ſhe received the above letter; which ſhe had no ſooner read than ſhe delivered it to him, ſaying: There, Sir, there is an account of your loſt ſheep. Fortune hath again reſtored her to you, and if you will be governed by my advice, it is poſſible you may yet preſerve her.

The 'ſquire had no ſooner read the letter than he leaped from his chair, threw his pipe into the fire, and gave a loud huzza for joy. He then ſummoned his ſervants, called for his boots, and ordered the Chevalier and ſeveral other horſes to be ſaddled, and that parſon Supple ſhould be immediately ſent for. Having done this, he turned to his ſiſter, caught her in his arms, and gave her a cloſe embrace, ſaying: Zounds! you don't ſeem pleaſed; one would imagine you was ſorry I have found the girl.

Brother, anſwered ſhe, the deepeſt politicians, who ſee to the bottom, diſcover often a very different aſpect of affairs, from what ſwims on the ſurface.

It is true, indeed, things do look rather leſs deſperate than they did formerly in Holland, when Lewis the Fourteenth was at the gates of Amſterdam; but there is a delicacy required in this matter, which you will pardon me, brother, if I ſuſpect you want. There is a decorum to be uſed with a woman of figure, ſuch as lady Bellaſton, brother, which requires a knowledge of the world, ſuperior, I am afraid, to yours.

Siſter, cries the 'ſquire, I know you have no opinion of my parts; but I'll ſhew you on this occaſion who is a fool. Knowledge quotha! I have not been in the country ſo long without having ſome knowledge of warrants and the law of the land. I know I may take my own wherever I can find it. Shew me my own daughter, and if I don't know how to come at her, I'll ſuffer you to call me a fool as long as I live. There be juſtices of peace in London, as well as in other places.

I proteſt, cries ſhe, you make me tremble for the event of this matter, which if you will proceed by my advice, you may bring to ſo good an iſſue. Do you really imagine, brother, that the houſe of a woman of figure is to be attacked by warrants and brutal juſtices of the peace? I will inform you how to proceed. As ſoon as you arrive in town, and have got yourſelf into a decent dreſs (for indeed, brother, you have none at preſent fit to appear in) you muſt ſend your compliments to lady Bellaſton,

and deſire leave to wait on her. When you are admitted to her preſence, as you certainly will be, and have told her your ſtory, and have made proper uſe of my name, (for I think you only juſt know one another by ſight, though you are relations,) I am confident ſhe will withdraw her protection from my niece, who hath certainly impoſed upon her. This is the only method. — Juſtices of peace, indeed! do you imagine any ſuch event can arrive to a woman of figure in a civilized nation?

D — n their figures, cries the 'ſquire; a pretty civilized nation, truly, where women are above the law. And what muſt I ſtand ſending a parcel of compliments to a confounded whore, that keeps away a daughter from her own natural father? I tell you, ſiſter, I am not ſo ignorant as you think me. — I know you would have women above the law, but it is all a lye; I heard his lordſhip ſay at a ſize, that no one is above the law. But this of yours is Hanover law, I ſuppoſe.

Mr. Weſtern, ſaid ſhe, I think you daily improve in ignorance. — I proteſt you are grown an arrant bear.

No more a bear than yourſelf, ſiſter Weſtern, ſaid the 'ſquire. — Pox! you may talk of your civility as you will. I am ſure you never ſhew any to me. I am no bear, no, nor no dog neither, though I know ſomebody, that is ſomething that begins with a b —; but pox! I will ſhew you I have a got

more good manners than ſome folks.

Mr. Weſtern, anſwered the lady, you may ſay what you pleaſe, *Je vous mépriſe de tout mon cœur.* I ſhall not, therefore, be angry. — Beſides, as my couſin with that odious Iriſh name juſtly ſays, I have that regard for the honour and true intereſt of my family, and that concern for my niece, who is a part of it, that I have reſolved to go to town myſelf upon this occaſion; for indeed, indeed, brother, you are not a fit miniſter to be employed at a polite court. — Greenland — Greenland ſhould always be the ſcene of the tramontane negotiation.

I thank heaven, cries the 'ſquire, I don't underſtand you now. You are got to your Hanoverian linguo. However, I'll ſhew you I ſcorn to be behind-hand in civility with you; and as you are not angry for what I have ſaid, ſo I am not angry for what you have ſaid. Indeed I have always thought it a folly for relations to quarrel; and if they do now and then give a haſty word, why people ſhould give and take; for my part, I never bear malice; and I take it very kind of you to go up to London; for I never was there but twice in my life, and then I did not ſtay above a fortnight at a time, and to be ſure I can't be expected to know much of the ſtreets and the folks in that time. I never denied that you know'd all theſe matters better than I. For me to diſpute that would be all as one, as for you to diſpute the management of a pack of dogs, or the

finding a hare ſitting, with me. — Which I promiſe you, ſays ſhe, I never will. — Well, and I promiſe you, returned he, that I never will diſpute t'other.

Here then a league was ſtruck (to borrow a phraſe from the lady) between the contending parties; and now the parſon arriving, and the horſes being ready, the 'ſquire departed, having promiſed his ſiſter to follow her advice, and ſhe prepared to follow him the next day.

But having communicated theſe matters to the parſon on the road, they both agreed that the preſcribed formalities might very well be diſpenſed with; and the 'ſquire having changed his mind, proceeded in the manner we have already ſeen.

CHAP. VII.

In which various misfortunes befel poor Jones.

AFFAIRS were in the aforeſaid ſituation, when Mrs. Honour arrived at Mrs. Miller's, and called Jones out from the company, as we have before ſeen, with whom, when ſhe found herſelf alone, ſhe began as follows:

O my dear Sir, how ſhall I get ſpirits to tell you; you are undone, Sir, and my poor lady's undone, and I am undone. Hath any thing happened to Sophia? cries Jones, ſtaring like a madman. All

that is bad, cries Honour; O I ſhall never get ſuch another lady! O that I ſhould ever live to ſee this day! At theſe words Jones turned pale as aſhes, trembled and ſtammered; but Honour went on: O Mr. Jones, I have loſt my lady for ever. How! what! for heaven's ſake tell me. — O my dear Sophia! — You may well call her ſo, ſaid Honour; ſhe was the deareſt lady to me, — — I ſhall never have ſuch another place. — D — n your place, cries Jones; where is? what! what is become of my Sophia? Ay, to be ſure, cries ſhe, ſervants may be d — n'd. It ſignifies nothing what becomes of them, though they are turned away, and ruined ever ſo much. To be ſure they are not fleſh and blood like other people. No to be ſure, it ſignifies nothing what becomes of them. — If you have any pity, any compaſſion, cries Jones, I beg you will inſtantly tell me what hath happened to Sophia. To be ſure I have more pity for you than you have for me, anſwered Honour; I don't d — n you becauſe you have loſt the ſweeteſt lady in the world. To be ſure you are worthy to be pitied, and I am worthy to be pitied too: for to be ſure if ever there was a good miſtreſs ——— What hath happened? cries Jones, in almoſt a raving fit. — What? — What? ſaid Honour; why the worſt that could have happened both for you and for me. —— Her father is come to town, and hath carried her away from us both. Here Jones fell

on his knees in thankſgiving that it was no worſe. — No worſe! repeated Honour, what could be worſe for either of us? He carried her off, ſwearing ſhe ſhould marry Mr. Blifil; that's for your comfort; and for poor me, I am turned out of doors. Indeed, Mrs. Honour, anſwered Jones, you frightened me out of my wits. I imagined ſome moſt dreadful ſudden accident had happened to Sophia; ſomething, compared to which, even the ſeeing her married to Blifil would be a trifle; but while there is life, there are hopes, my dear Honour. Women in this land of liberty cannot be married by actual brutal force. To be ſure, Sir, ſaid ſhe, that's true. There may be ſome hopes for you; but alack-a-day! what hopes are there for poor me? And to be ſure, Sir, you muſt be ſenſible I ſuffer all this upon your account. All the quarrel the 'ſquire hath to me is for taking your part, as I have done, againſt Mr. Blifil. Indeed, Mrs. Honour, anſwered he, I am ſenſible of my obligations to you, and will leave nothing in my power undone to make you amends. Alas, Sir, ſaid ſhe, what can make a ſervant amends for the loſs of one place, but the getting another altogether as good! — Do not deſpair, Mrs. Honour, ſaid Jones, I hope to reinſtate you again in the ſame. Alack-a-day, Sir, ſaid ſhe, how can I flatter myſelf with ſuch hopes, when I know it's a thing impoſſible; for the 'ſquire is ſo ſet againſt me: and yet if you ſhould ever have my lady, as to be ſure I now hopes heartily

you will; for you are a generous good-natured gentleman, and I am ſure you loves her, and to be ſure ſhe loves you as dearly as her own ſoul; it is a matter in vain to deny it; becauſe as why, every body that is in the leaſt acquainted with my lady, muſt ſee it; for, poor dear lady, ſhe can't diſſemble; and if two people who loves one another a'n't happy, why who ſhould be ſo? Happineſs don't always depend upon what people has; beſides, my lady has enough for both. To be ſure, therefore, as one may ſay, it would be all the pity in the world to keep two ſuch loviers aſunder; nay, I am convinced for my part, you will meet together at laſt; for if it is to be, there is no preventing it. If a marriage is made in heaven, all the juſtices of peace upon earth can't break it off. To be ſure I wiſhes that parſon Supple had but a little more ſpirit to tell the 'ſquire of his wickedneſs in endeavouring to force his daughter contrary to her liking; but then his whole dependance is on the 'ſquire, and ſo the poor gentleman, though he is a very religious good ſort of a man, and talks of the badneſs of ſuch doings behind the ſquire's back, yet he dares not ſay his ſoul is his own to his face. To be ſure I never ſaw him make ſo bold as juſt now; I was afeard the 'ſquire would have ſtruck him. — I would not have your honour be melancholy, Sir, nor deſpair; things may go better, as long as you are ſure of my lady, and that I am certain you may be; for ſhe

never will be brought to conſent to marry any other man. Indeed, I am terribly afeard the 'ſquire will do her a miſchief in his paſſion, for he is a prodigious paſſionate gentleman; and I am afeard too the poor lady will be brought to break her heart, for ſhe is as tender-hearted as a chicken; it is pity, methinks, ſhe had not a little of my courage. If I was in love with a young man, and my father offered to lock me up, I'd tear his eyes out, but I'd come at him; but then there's a great fortune in the caſe, which it is in her father's power either to give her or not; that, to be ſure, may make ſome difference.

Whether Jones gave ſtrict attention to all the foregoing harangue, or whether it was for want of any vacancy in the diſcourſe, I cannot determine; but he never once attempted to anſwer, nor did ſhe once ſtop, till Partridge came running into the room, and informed him that the great lady was upon the ſtairs.

Nothing could equal the dilemma to which Jones was now reduced. Honour knew nothing of any acquaintance that ſubſiſted between him and lady Bellaſton, and ſhe was almoſt the laſt perſon in the world to whom he would have communicated it. In this hurry and diſtreſs, he took (as is common enough) the worſt courſe, and inſtead of expoſing her to the lady, which would have been of little conſequence, he choſe to expoſe the lady to her; he, therefore, reſolved to hide Honour, whom he

had but juſt time to convey behind the bed, and to draw the curtains.

The hurry in which Jones had been all day engaged on account of his poor landlady and her family, the terrors occaſioned by Mrs. Honour, and the confuſion into which he was thrown by the ſudden arrival of lady Bellaſton, had altogether driven former thoughts out of his head; ſo that it never once occurr'd to his memory to act the part of a ſick man; which indeed, neither the gaiety of his dreſs, nor the freſhneſs of his countenance, would have at all ſupported.

He received her ladyſhip, therefore, rather agreeably to her deſires, than to her expectations, with all the good humour he could muſter in his countenance, and without any real or affected appearance of the leaſt diſorder.

Lady Bellaſton no ſooner entered the room, than ſhe ſquatted herſelf down on the bed: So, my dear Jones, ſaid ſhe, you find nothing can detain me long from you. Perhaps I ought to be angry with you, that I have neither ſeen nor heard from you all day; for I perceive your diſtemper would have ſuffered you to come abroad: nay, I ſuppoſe you have not ſat in your chamber all day dreſt up like a fine lady to ſee company after a lying-in; but however, don't think I intend to ſcold you: for I never will give you an excuſe for the cold behaviour of a huſband, by putting on the ill humour of a wife.

Nay, lady Bellaſton, ſaid Jones, I am ſure your ladyſhip will not upbraid me with neglect of duty, when I only waited for orders. Who, my dear creature, hath reaſon to complain? Who miſſed an appointment laſt night, and left an unhappy man to expect, and wiſh, and ſigh, and languiſh?

Do not mention it, my dear Mr. Jones, cried ſhe. If you knew the occaſion, you would pity me. In ſhort, it is impoſſible to conceive what women of condition are obliged to ſuffer from the impertinence of fools, in order to keep up the farce of the world. I am glad, however, all your languiſhing and wiſhing have done you no harm: for you never looked better in your life. Upon my faith! Jones, you might at this inſtant ſit for the picture of Adonis.

There are certain words of provocation which men of honour hold can only properly be anſwered by a blow. Among lovers poſſibly there may be ſome expreſſions which can be only anſwered by a kiſs. The compliment which lady Bellaſton now made Jones, ſeems to be of this kind, eſpecially as it was attended with a look in which the lady conveyed more ſoft ideas than it was poſſible to expreſs with her tongue.

Jones was certainly at this inſtant in one of the moſt diſagreeable and diſtreſs'd ſituations imaginable; for to carry on the compariſon we made uſe of before, though the provocation was given by the lady, Jones could not receive ſatisfaction, nor ſo much as

offer to aſk it, in the preſence of a third perſon; ſeconds in this kind of duels not being according to the law of arms. As this objection did not occur to lady Bellaſton, who was ignorant of any other woman being there but herſelf, ſhe waited ſome time in great aſtoniſhment for an anſwer from Jones, who, conſcious of the ridiculous figure he made, ſtood at a diſtance, and not daring to give the proper anſwer, gave none at all. Nothing can be imagined more comic, nor yet more tragical than this ſcene would have been, if it had laſted much longer. The lady had already changed colour two or three times; had got up from the bed and ſat down again, while Jones was wiſhing the ground to ſink under him, or the houſe to fall on his head, when an odd accident freed him from an embarraſsment, out of which neither the eloquence of a Cicero, nor the politics of a Machiavel, could have delivered him, without utter diſgrace.

This was no other than the arrival of young Nightingale dead drunk; or rather in that ſtate of drunkenneſs, which deprives men of the uſe of their reaſon, without depriving them of the uſe of their limbs.

Mrs. Miller and her daughters were in bed, and Partridge was ſmoaking his pipe by the kitchen fire; ſo that he arrived at Mr. Jones's chamber door without any interruption. This he burſt open, and was entering without any ceremony, when Jones ſtarted

ſtarted from his ſeat, and ran to oppoſe him; which he did ſo effectually, that Nightingale never came far enough within the door to ſee who was ſitting on the bed.

Mr. Nightingale had in reality miſtaken Jones's apartment for that in which himſelf had lodged; he, therefore, ſtrongly inſiſted on coming in, often ſwearing that he would not be kept from his own bed. Jones, however, prevailed over him, and delivered him into the hands of Partridge, whom the noiſe on the ſtairs ſoon ſummoned to his maſter's aſſiſtance.

And now Jones was unwillingly obliged to return to his own apartment, where at the very inſtant of his entrance he heard lady Bellaſton venting an exclamation, though not a very loud one; and at the ſame time, ſaw her flinging herſelf into a chair in a vaſt agitation, which in a lady of a tender conſtitution would have been an hyſteric fit.

In reality, the lady frightened with the ſtruggle between the two men, of which ſhe did not know what would be the iſſue, as ſhe heard Nightingale ſwear many oaths he would come to his own bed, attempted to retire to her known place of hiding, which to her great confuſion ſhe found already occupied by another.

Is this uſage to be borne, Mr. Jones? cries the lady, — baſeſt of men! — What wretch is this to whom you have expoſed me? Wretch! cries Honour, burſting in a violent rage from her place of

concealment — marry come up! — Wretch forſooth! — as poor a wretch as I am, I am honeſt; that is more than ſome folks who are richer can ſay.

Jones, inſtead of applying himſelf directly to take off the edge of Mrs. Honour's reſentment, as a more experienced gallant would have done, fell to curſing his ſtars, and lamenting himſelf as the moſt unfortunate man in the world; and preſently after, addreſſing himſelf to lady Bellaſton, he fell to ſome very abſurd proteſtations of innocence. By this time the lady having recovered the uſe of her reaſon, which ſhe had as ready as any woman in the world, eſpecially on ſuch occaſions, calmly replied: Sir, you need make no apologies, I ſee now who the perſon is; I did not at firſt know Mrs. Honour; but now I do, I can ſuſpect nothing wrong between her and you; and I am ſure ſhe is a woman of too good ſenſe to put any wrong conſtructions upon my viſit to you; I have been always her friend, and it may be in my power to be much more ſo hereafter.

Mrs. Honour was altogether as placable, as ſhe was paſſionate. Hearing, therefore, lady Bellaſton aſſume the ſoft tone, ſhe likewiſe ſoftened her's. — I'm ſure, Ma'am, ſays ſhe, I have been always ready to acknowledge your la'ſhip's friendſhips to me; ſure I never had ſo good a friend as your la'ſhip — and to be ſure now I ſee it is your la'ſhip that I ſpoke to, I could almoſt bite my tongue off for very mad. — I conſtructions upon your la'ſhip — to be ſure it

doth not become a ſervant as I am to think about ſuch a great great lady — I mean I was a ſervant: for indeed I am nobody's ſervant now, the more miſerable wretch is me — I have loſt the beſt miſtreſs. — Here Honour thought fit to produce a ſhower of tears. — Don't cry, child, ſays the good lady. Ways perhaps may be found to make you amends. Come to me to-morrow morning. She then took up her fan which lay on the ground, and without even looking at Jones, walked very majeſtically out of the room; there being a kind of dignity in the impudence of women of quality, which their inferiors vainly aſpire to attain to in circumſtances of this nature.

Jones followed her down ſtairs, often offering her his hand, which ſhe abſolutely refuſed him, and got into her chair without taking any notice of him as he ſtood bowing before her.

At his return up ſtairs, a long dialogue paſſed between him and Mrs. Honour, while ſhe was adjuſting herſelf after the diſcompoſure ſhe had undergone. The ſubject of this was his infidelity to her young lady; on which ſhe enlarged with great bitterneſs; but Jones at laſt found means to reconcile her, and not only ſo, but to obtain a promiſe of moſt inviolable ſecrecy, and that ſhe would the next morning endeavour to find out Sophia, and bring him a further account of the proceedings of the 'ſquire.

Thus ended this unfortunate adventure to the ſatisfaction only of Mrs. Honour; for a ſecret (as ſome of my readers will perhaps acknowledge from experience) is often a very valuable poſſeſſion: and that not only to thoſe who faithfully keep it, but ſometimes to ſuch as whiſper it about till it comes to the ears of every one, except the ignorant perſon, who pays for the ſuppoſed concealing of what is publickly known.

CHAP. VIII.

Short and ſweet.

NOTWITHSTANDING all the obligations ſhe had received from Jones, Mrs. Miller could not forbear in the morning ſome gentle remonſtrances for the hurricane which had happened the preceding night in his chamber. Theſe were however ſo gentle and ſo friendly; profeſſing, and indeed truly, to aim at nothing more than the real good of Mr. Jones himſelf, that he, far from being offended, thankfully received the admonition of the good woman, expreſſed much concern for what had paſt, excuſed it as well as he could, and promiſed never more to bring the ſame diſturbances into the houſe.

But though Mrs. Miller did not refrain from a ſhort expoſtulation in private at their firſt meeting; yet the occaſion of his being ſummoned down ſtairs

that morning was of a much more agreeable kind; being indeed to perform the office of a father to Miſs Nancy, and to give her in wedlock to Mr. Nightingale, who was now ready dreſt, and full as ſober as many of my readers will think a man ought to be, who receives a wife in ſo imprudent a manner.

And here perhaps it may be proper to account for the eſcape which this young gentleman had made from his uncle, and for his appearance in the condition in which we have ſeen him the night before.

Now when the uncle had arrived at his lodgings with his nephew, partly to indulge his own inclinations (for he dearly loved his bottle) and partly to diſqualify his nephew from the immediate execution of his purpoſe, he ordered wine to be ſet on the table; with which he ſo briſkly plyed the young gentleman, that this latter, who, though not much uſed to drinking, did not deteſt it ſo as to be guilty of diſobedience, or of want of complaiſance by refuſing, was ſoon completely finiſhed.

Juſt as the uncle had obtained this victory, and was preparing a bed for his nephew, a meſſenger arrived with a piece of news, which ſo entirely diſconcerted and ſhocked him, that he in a moment loſt all conſideration for his nephew, and his whole mind became entirely taken up with his own concerns.

This ſudden and afflicting news was no leſs than that his daughter had taken the opportunity of almoſt the firſt moment of his abſence, and had

gone off with a neighbouring young clergyman; againſt whom, though her father could have had but one objection, namely, that he was worth nothing, yet ſhe had never thought proper to communicate her amour even to that father; and ſo artfully had ſhe managed, that it had never been once ſuſpected by any, till now that it was conſummated.

Old Mr. Nightingale no ſooner received this account, than in the utmoſt confuſion he ordered a poſt-chaiſe to be inſtantly got ready, and having recommended his nephew to the care of a ſervant, he directly left the houſe, ſcarce knowing what he did, nor whither he went.

The uncle being thus departed, when the ſervant came to attend the nephew to bed, had waked him for that purpoſe, and had at laſt made him ſenſible that his uncle was gone, he, inſtead of accepting the kind offices tendered him, inſiſted on a chair being called; with this the ſervant, who had received no ſtrict orders to the contrary, readily complied; and thus being conducted back to the houſe of Mrs. Miller, he had ſtaggered up to Mr. Jones's chamber, as hath been before recounted.

This bar of the uncle being now removed (though young Nightingale knew not as yet in what manner) and all parties being quickly ready, the mother, Mr. Jones, Mr. Nightingale, and his love, ſtept into a hackney-coach, which conveyed them to Doctors-Commons; where Miſs Nancy was, in

vulgar language, ſoon made an honeſt woman, and the poor mother became, in the pureſt ſenſe of the word, one of the happieſt of all human beings.

And now, Mr. Jones having ſeen his good offices to that poor woman and her family brought to a happy concluſion, began to apply himſelf to his own concerns; but here, leſt many of my readers ſhould cenſure his folly for thus troubling himſelf with the affairs of others, and leſt ſome few ſhould think he acted more diſintereſtedly than indeed he did, we think proper to aſſure our reader, that he was ſo far from being unconcerned in this matter, that he had indeed a very conſiderable intereſt in bringing it to that final conſummation.

To explain this ſeeming paradox at once, he was one who could truly ſay with him in Terence, *Homo ſum, nihil humani a me alienum puto.* He was never an indifferent ſpectator of the miſery or happineſs of any one; and he felt either the one or the other in greater proportion as he himſelf contributed to either. He could not, therefore, be the inſtrument of raiſing a whole family from the loweſt ſtate of wretchedneſs to the higheſt pitch of joy without conveying great felicity to himſelf; more perhaps than worldly men often purchaſe to themſelves by undergoing the moſt ſevere labour, and often by wading through the deepeſt iniquity.

Thoſe readers who are of the ſame complexion with him, will perhaps think this ſhort chapter

contains abundance of matter; while others may probably wiſh, ſhort as it is, that it had been totally ſpared as impertinent to the main deſign, which I ſuppoſe they conclude is to bring Mr. Jones to the gallows, or, if poſſible, to a more deplorable cataſtrophe.

CHAP. IX.

Containing love letters of ſeveral ſorts.

MR. Jones, at his return home, found the following letters lying on his table, which he luckily opened in the order they were ſent.

LETTER I.

Surely I am under ſome ſtrange infatuation; I cannot keep my reſolutions a moment, however ſtrongly made or juſtly founded. Laſt night I reſolved never to ſee you more; this morning I am willing to hear if you can, as you ſay, clear up this affair. And yet I know that to be impoſſible. I have ſaid every thing to myſelf which you can invent. — Perhaps not. Perhaps your invention is ſtronger. Come to me, therefore, the moment you receive this. If you can forge an excuſe, I almoſt promiſe you to believe it. Betrayed to — I will think no more. — Come to me directly. — This is the third letter I have writ, the two former are

burnt — I am almoſt inclined to burn this too — I wiſh I may preſerve my ſenſes. — Come to me preſently.

LETTER II.

If you ever expect to be forgiven, or even ſuffered within my doors, come to me this inſtant.

LETTER III.

I now find you was not at home when my notes came to your lodgings. The moment you receive this, let me ſee you; — I ſhall not ſtir out; nor ſhall any body be let in but yourſelf. Sure nothing can detain you long.

Jones had juſt read over theſe three billets, when Mr. Nightingale came into the room. Well, Tom, ſaid he, any news from lady Bellaſton, after laſt night's adventure? (for it was now no ſecret to any one in that houſe who the lady was.) The lady Bellaſton? anſwered Jones very gravely. — Nay, dear Tom, cries Nightingale, don't be ſo reſerved to your friends. Though I was too drunk to ſee her laſt night, I ſaw her at the maſquerade. Do you think I am ignorant who the queen of the fairies is? And did you really then know the lady at the maſquerade? ſaid Jones. Yes, upon my ſoul, did I, ſaid Nightingale, and have given you twenty hints of it ſince, though you ſeemed always ſo tender

on that point, that I would not ſpeak plainly. I fancy, my friend, by your extreme nicety in this matter, you are not ſo well acquainted with the character of the lady, as with her perſon. Don't be angry, Tom, but, upon my honour, you are not the firſt young fellow ſhe hath debauched. Her reputation is in no danger, believe me.

Though Jones had no reaſon to imagine the lady to have been of the veſtal kind when his amour began; yet as he was thoroughly ignorant of the town, and had very little acquaintance in it, he had yet no knowledge of that character which is vulgarly called a demirep; that is to ſay, a woman who intrigues with every man ſhe likes, under the name and appearance of virtue; and who, though ſome over-nice ladies will not be ſeen with her, is viſited (as they term it) by the whole town; in ſhort, whom every body knows to be what no body calls her.

When he found, therefore, that Nightingale was perfectly acquainted with his intrigue, and began to ſuſpect, that ſo ſcrupulous a delicacy as he had hitherto obſerved, was not quite neceſſary on the occaſion, he gave a latitude to his friend's tongue, and deſired him to ſpeak plainly what he knew, or had ever heard of the lady.

Nightingale, who, in many other inſtances, was rather too effeminate in his diſpoſition, had a pretty ſtrong inclination to tittle-tattle. He had no ſooner, therefore, received a full liberty of ſpeaking from

Jones, than he entered upon a long narrative concerning the lady; which, as it contained many particulars highly to her diſhonour, we have too great a tenderneſs for all women of condition to repeat. We would cautiouſly avoid giving an opportunity to the future commentators on our works, of making any malicious application; and of forcing us to be, againſt our will, the author of ſcandal, which never entered into our head.

Jones having very attentively heard all that Nightingale had to ſay, fetched a deep ſigh, which the other obſerving, cried: Hey-day! why thou art not in love, I hope! Had I imagined my ſtories would have affected you, I promiſe you ſhould never have heard them. O my dear friend, cries Jones, I am ſo entangled with this woman, that I know not how to extricate myſelf. In love indeed! no, my friend, but I am under obligations to her, and very great ones. Since you know ſo much, I will be very explicit with you. It is owing perhaps ſolely to her, that I have not before this wanted a bit of bread. How can I poſſibly deſert ſuch a woman? and yet I muſt deſert her, or be guilty of the blackeſt treachery to one, who deſerves infinitely better of me than ſhe can: a woman, my Nightingale, for whom I have a paſſion which few can have an idea of. I am half diſtracted with doubts how to act. And is this other, pray, an honourable miſtreſs? cries Nightingale. Honourable! anſwered Jones; no breath ever yet duſt

ſully her reputation. The ſweeteſt air is not purer, the limpid ſtream not clearer than her honour. She is all over, both in mind and body, conſummate perfection. She is the moſt beautiful creature in the univerſe; and yet ſhe is miſtreſs of ſuch noble, elevated qualities, that though ſhe is never from my thoughts, I ſcarce ever think of her beauty, but when I ſee it. —— And can you, my good friend, cries Nightingale, with ſuch an engagement as this upon your hands, heſitate a moment about quitting ſuch a — Hold, ſaid Jones, no more abuſe of her; I deteſt the thought of ingratitude. Pooh! anſwered the other, you are not the firſt upon whom ſhe hath conferred obligations of this kind. She is remarkably liberal where ſhe likes; though, let me tell you, her favours are ſo prudently beſtowed, that they ſhould rather raiſe a man's vanity, than his gratitude. In ſhort, Nightingale proceeded ſo far on this head, and told his friend ſo many ſtories of the lady, which he ſwore to the truth of, that he entirely removed all eſteem for her from the breaſt of Jones; and his gratitude was leſſened in proportion. Indeed he began to look on all the favours he had received, rather as wages than benefits, which not only depreciated her, but himſelf too, in his own conceit, and put him quite out of humour with both. From this diſguſt, his mind, by a natural tranſition, turned towards Sophia: her virtue, her purity, her love to him, her ſufferings on his account, filled all his thoughts, and made his commerce with lady Bellaſton

appear ſtill more odious. The reſult of all was, that though his turning himſelf out of her ſervice, in which light he now ſaw his affair with her, would be the loſs of his bread; yet he determined to quit her, if he could but find a handſome pretence; which having communicated to his friend, Nightingale conſidered a little, and then ſaid: I have it, my boy! I have found out a ſure method: propoſe marriage to her, and I would venture hanging upon the ſucceſs. Marriage! cries Jones. Ay, propoſe marriage, anſwered Nightingale, and ſhe will declare off in a moment. I knew a young fellow whom ſhe kept formerly, who made the offer to her in earneſt, and was preſently turned off for his pains.

Jones declared, he could not venture the experiment. Perhaps, ſaid he, ſhe may be leſs ſhocked at this propoſal from one man than from another. And if ſhe ſhould take me at my word, where am I then? Caught in my own trap, and undone for ever. No, anſwered Nightingale, not if I can give you an expedient, by which you may, at any time, get out of the trap. — What expedient can that be? replied Jones. This, anſwered Nightingale. The young fellow I mentioned, who is one of the moſt intimate acquaintances I have in the world, is ſo angry with her for ſome ill offices ſhe hath ſince done him, that I am ſure he would, without any difficulty, give you a ſight of her letters; upon which you may decently break with her; and declare off before the knot is

tied, if ſhe ſhould really be willing to tie it, which I am convinced ſhe will not.

After ſome heſitation, Jones, upon the ſtrength of this aſſurance, conſented; but as he ſwore, he wanted the confidence to propoſe the matter to her face, he wrote the following letter, which Nightingale dictated.

Madam,

I am extremely concerned, that, by an unfortunate engagement abroad, I ſhould have miſſed receiving the honour of your ladyſhip's commands the moment they came; and the delay which I muſt now ſuffer of vindicating myſelf to your ladyſhip, greatly adds to this misfortune. O lady Bellaſton, what a terror have I been in, for fear your reputation ſhould be expoſed by theſe perverſe accidents! There is one only way to ſecure it. I need not name what that is. Only permit me to ſay, that as your honour is as dear to me as my own; ſo my ſole ambition is to have the glory of laying my liberty at your feet; and believe me when I aſſure you, I can never be made completely happy, without you generouſly beſtow on me a legal right of calling you mine for ever. I am,

Madam,

with moſt profound reſpect,

your ladyſhip's moſt obliged,

obedient humble ſervant,

THOMAS JONES.

To this ſhe preſently returned the following anſwer:

Sir,

When I read over your ſerious epiſtle, I could from its coldneſs and formality, have ſworn that you had already the legal right you mention; nay, that we had, for many years, compoſed that monſtrous animal a huſband and wife. Do you really then imagine me a fool? or do you fancy yourſelf capable of ſo entirely perſuading me out of my ſenſes, that I ſhould deliver my whole fortune into your power, in order to enable you to ſupport your pleaſures at my expence? Are theſe the proofs of love which I expected? Is this the return for — but I ſcorn to upbraid you, and am in great admiration of your profound reſpect.

P. S. I am prevented from reviſing: — perhaps I have ſaid more than I meant. — Come to me at eight this evening.

Jones, by the advice of his privy-council, replied:

Madam,

It is impoſſible to expreſs how much I am ſhocked at the ſuſpicion you entertain of me. Can lady Bellaſton have conferred favours on a man whom ſhe could believe capable of ſo baſe a deſign? Or can ſhe

treat the moſt ſolemn tie of love with contempt? Can you imagine, Madam, that if the violence of my paſſion, in an unguarded moment, overcame the tenderneſs which I have for your honour, that I would think of indulging myſelf in the continuance of an intercourſe which could not poſſibly eſcape long the notice of the world; and which, when diſcovered, muſt prove ſo fatal to your reputation? If ſuch be your opinion of me, I muſt pray for a ſudden opportunity of returning thoſe pecuniary obligations, which I have been ſo unfortunate to receive at your hands; and for thoſe of a more tender kind, I ſhall ever remain, &c. And ſo concluded in the very words with which he had concluded the former letter.

The lady anſwered as follows:

I ſee you are a villain; and I deſpiſe you from my ſoul. If you come here, I ſhall not be at home.

Though Jones was well ſatisfied with his deliverance from a thraldom, which thoſe who have experienced it, will, I apprehend, allow to be none of the lighteſt, he was not, however, perfectly eaſy in his mind. There was, in this ſcheme, too much of fallacy to ſatisfy one who utterly deteſted every ſpecies of falſhood or diſhoneſty: nor would he, indeed, have ſubmitted to put it in practice, had he not been involved in a diſtreſsful ſituation, where he was obliged to be guilty of ſome diſhonour, either to the one lady or the other;

other; and ſurely the reader will allow, that every good principle, as well as love, pleaded ſtrongly in favour of Sophia.

Nightingale highly exulted in the ſucceſs of his ſtratagem, upon which he received many thanks, and much applauſe from his friend. He anſwered: Dear Tom, we have conferred very different obligations on each other. To me you owe the regaining your liberty; to you I owe the loſs of mine. But if you are as happy in the one inſtance as I am in the other, I promiſe you, we are the two happieſt fellows in England.

The two gentlemen were now ſummoned down to dinner, where Mrs. Miller, who performed herſelf the office of cook, had exerted her beſt talents, to celebrate the wedding of her daughter. This joyful circumſtance ſhe aſcribed principally to the friendly behaviour of Jones: her whole ſoul was fired with gratitude towards him, and all her looks, words, and actions, were ſo buſied in expreſſing it, that her daughter, and even her new ſon-in-law, were very little the objects of her conſideration.

Dinner was juſt ended when Mrs. Miller received a letter; but as we have had letters enough in this chapter, we ſhall communicate the contents in our next.

CHAP. X.

Conſiſting partly of facts, and partly of obſervations upon them.

THE letter then which arrived at the end of the preceding chapter was from Mr. Allworthy; and the purport of it was his intention to come immediately to town, with his nephew Blifil, and a deſire to be accommodated with his uſual lodgings, which were the firſt floor for himſelf, and the ſecond for his nephew.

The chearfulneſs which had before diſplayed itſelf in the countenance of the poor woman, was a little clouded on this occaſion. This news did indeed a good deal diſconcert her. To requite ſo diſintereſted a match with her daughter, by preſently turning her new ſon-in-law out of doors, appeared to her very unjuſtifiable on the one hand; and on the other, ſhe could ſcarce bear the thoughts of making any excuſe to Mr. Allworthy, after all the obligations received from him, for depriving him of lodgings which were indeed ſtrictly his due: for that gentleman, in conferring all his numberleſs benefits on others, acted by a rule diametrically oppoſite to what is practiſed by moſt generous people. He contrived, on all occaſions, to hide his beneficence not only from the world, but even from the object of it. He conſtantly uſed the

words lend and pay, inſtead of give; and by every other method he could invent, always leſſened with his tongue the favours he conferred, while he was heaping them with both his hands. When he ſettled the annuity of 50 l. a year, therefore, on Mrs. Miller, he told her, it was in conſideration of always having her firſt floor when he was in town, (which he ſcarce ever intended to be) but that ſhe might let it at any other time, for that he would always ſend her a month's warning. He was now, however, hurried to town ſo ſuddenly that he had no opportunity of giving ſuch notice; and this hurry, probably, prevented him, when he wrote for his lodgings, adding, if they were then empty: for he would moſt certainly have been well ſatisfied to have relinquiſhed them on a leſs ſufficient excuſe, than what Mrs. Miller could now have made.

But there are a ſort of perſons, who, as Prior excellently well remarks, direct their conduct by ſomething

> Beyond the fix'd and ſettled rules
> Of vice and virtue in the ſchools,
> Beyond the letter of the law.

To theſe it is ſo far from being ſufficient that their defence would acquit them at the Old Bailey, that they are not even contented, though conſcience, the ſevereſt of all judges, ſhould diſcharge them. Nothing ſhort of the fair and honourable will ſatisfy the delicacy of their minds; and if any of their actions fall ſhort of

this mark, they mope and pine, are as uneaſy and reſtleſs as a murderer, who is afraid of a ghoſt, or of the hangman.

Mrs. Miller was one of theſe. She could not conceal her uneaſineſs at this letter; with the contents of which ſhe had no ſooner acquainted the company, and given ſome hints of her diſtreſs, than Jones, her good angel, preſently relieved her anxiety. As for myſelf, Madam, ſaid he, my lodging is at your ſervice at a moment's warning: and Mr. Nightingale, I am ſure, as he cannot yet prepare a houſe fit to receive his lady, will conſent to return to his new lodging, whither Mrs. Nightingale will certainly conſent to go. With which propoſal both huſband and wife inſtantly agreed.

The reader will eaſily believe, that the cheeks of Mrs. Miller began again to glow with additional gratitude to Jones; but, perhaps, it may be more difficult to perſuade him, that Mr. Jones having, in his laſt ſpeech, called her daughter Mrs. Nightingale, (it being the firſt time that agreeable ſound had ever reached her ears) gave the fond mother more ſatisfaction, and warmed her heart more towards Jones, than his having diſſipated her preſent anxiety.

The next day was then appointed for the removal of the new-married couple, and of Mr. Jones, who was likewiſe to be provided for in the ſame houſe with his friend. And now the ſerenity of the company was again reſtored, and they paſt the day in the utmoſt chearfulneſs, all except Jones, who, tho' he outwardly

accompanied the reſt in their mirth, felt many a bitter pang on the account of his Sophia; which were not a little heightened by the news of Mr. Blifil's coming to town, (for he clearly ſaw the intention of his journey:) and what greatly aggravated his concern was, that Mrs. Honour, who had promiſed to enquire after Sophia, and to make her report to him early the next evening, had diſappointed him.

In the ſituation that he and his miſtreſs were in at this time, there were ſcarce any grounds for him to hope, that he ſhould hear any good news; yet he was as impatient to ſee Mrs. Honour, as if he had expected ſhe would bring him a letter with an aſſignation in it from Sophia, and bore the diſappointment as ill. Whether this impatience aroſe from that natural weakneſs of the human mind, which makes it deſirous to know the worſt, and renders uncertainty the moſt intolerable of pains; or whether he ſtill flattered himſelf with ſome ſecret hopes, we will not determine. But that it might be the laſt, whoever has loved cannot but know. For of all the powers exerciſed by this paſſion over our minds, one of the moſt wonderful is that of ſupporting hope in the midſt of deſpair. Difficulties, improbabilities, nay impoſſibilities are quite overlooked by it; ſo that to any man extremely in love, may be applied what Addiſon ſays of Cæſar,

The Alps, and Pyrenæans, ſink before him.

Yet it is equally true, that the ſame paſſion will

ſometimes make mountains of mole-hills, and produce deſpair in the midſt of hope; but theſe cold fits laſt not long in good conſtitutions. Which temper Jones was now in, we leave the reader to gueſs, having no exact information about it; but this is certain, that he had ſpent two hours in expectation, when being unable any longer to conceal his uneaſineſs, he retired to his room; where his anxiety had almoſt made him frantick, when the following letter was brought him from Mrs. Honour, with which we ſhall preſent the reader *verbatim & litteratim*.

SIR,

I ſhud ſartenly haf kaled on you a cordin too mi prommiſs haddunt itt bin that hur laſhipp prevent mee; for too bee ſur, Sir, you noſe very well that evere perſun muſt luk furſt at ome, and ſartenly ſuch anuther offar mite not ave ever hapned, ſo as I ſhud ave bin juſtly to blam, had I not excepted of it when her laſhipp was ſo veri kine as to offar to mak mee hur one uman without mi ever aſkin any ſuch thing, to bee ſur ſhee is won of thee beſt ladis in the wurld, and pepil who ſaſe to the kontrari, muſt bee veri wiket pepil in thare harts. To bee ſur if ever I ave ſad any thing of that kine, it as bin thru ignorens and I am hartili ſorri for it. I noſe your onur to be a genteelman of more onur and oneſty, if I ever ſad ani ſuch thing, to repete it to hurt a pore ſervant that as alwais ad

thee grateſt reſpect in thee wurld for ure onur. To bee ſur won ſhud kepe wons tung within wons teeth, for no boddi noſe what may hapen; and to bee ſur if ani boddi ad tolde mee yeſterday, that I ſhud haf bin in ſo gud a plaſe to day, I ſhud not haf beleeved it; for to bee ſur I never was a dremd of any ſuch thing, nor ſhud I ever haf ſoft after ani other bodi's plaſe; but as her laſhipp was ſo kine of her one a corde to give it mee without aſkin, to bee ſur Mrs. Etoff herſelf, nor no other boddi can blam mee for exceptin ſuch a thing when it fals in my way. I beg ure onur not to menſhion ani thing of what I haf ſad, for I wiſh ure onur all thee gud luk in thee wurld; and I don't cueſtion butt thatt u will haf Ma'am Sophia in thee end; butt aſs to miſelf, ure onur noſe I cant bee of ani farder ſarvis to u in that matar, nou bein under thee cumand off anuthar parſon, and nott mi one miſtres. I begg ure onur to ſay nothing of what paſt, and beleeve me to bee, Sir,

Ure onur's umble ſarvant
To cumand till deth,
HONOUR BLACKMORE.

Various were the conjectures which Mr. Jones entertained for this ſtep of lady Bellaſton; who in reality had little farther deſign than to ſecure within her own houſe the repoſitory of a ſecret, which ſhe choſe ſhould make no farther progreſs than it had

made already; but moſtly ſhe deſired to keep it from the ears of Sophia; for though that young lady was almoſt the only one who would never have repeated it again, her ladyſhip could not perſuade herſelf of this; ſince as ſhe now hated poor Sophia with moſt implacable hatred, ſhe conceived a reciprocal hatred to herſelf to be lodged in the tender breaſt of our heroine, where no ſuch paſſion had ever yet found an entrance.

While Jones was terrifying himſelf with the apprehenſion of a thouſand dreadful machinations, and deep political deſigns, which he imagined to be at the bottom of the promotion of Honour, fortune, who hitherto ſeems to have been an utter enemy to his match with Sophia, tried a new method to put a final end to it, by throwing a temptation in the way of Jones, which in his preſent deſperate ſituation it ſeemed unlikely he ſhould be able to reſiſt.

CHAP. XI.

[Containing curious, but not unprecedented matter.

THERE was a lady, one Mrs. Hunt, who had often ſeen Jones at the houſe where he lodged, being intimately acquainted with the women there, and indeed a very great friend to Mrs. Miller. Her age was about thirty; for ſhe owned ſix and twenty;

her face and perſon very good, only inclining a little too much to be fat. She had been married young by her relations to an old turkey-merchant, who having got a great fortune, had left off trade. With him ſhe lived without reproach, but not without pain, in a ſtate of great ſelf-denial, for about twelve years; and her virtue was rewarded by his dying, and leaving her very rich. The firſt year of her widowhood was juſt at an end, and ſhe had paſt it in a good deal of retirement, ſeeing only a few particular friends, and dividing her time between her devotions and novels, of which ſhe was always extremely fond. Very good health, a very warm conſtitution, and a great deal of religion, made it abſolutely neceſſary for her to marry again; and ſhe reſolved to pleaſe herſelf in her ſecond huſband, as ſhe had done her friends in the firſt. From her the following billet was brought to Jones.

SIR,

From the firſt day I ſaw you, I doubt my eyes have told you too plainly, that you were not indifferent to me; but neither my tongue nor my hand ſhould have ever avowed it, had not the ladies of the family where you are lodged given me ſuch a character of you, and told me ſuch proofs of your virtue and goodneſs, as convince me you are not only the moſt agreeable, but the moſt worthy of men. I have alſo

the ſatisfaction to hear from them, that neither my perſon, underſtanding, or character, are diſagreeable to you. I have a fortune ſufficient to make us both happy, but which cannot make me ſo without you. In thus diſpoſing of myſelf, I know I ſhall incur the cenſure of the world; but if I did not love you more than I fear the world, I ſhould not be worthy of you. One only difficulty ſtops me: I am informed you are engaged in a commerce of gallantry with a woman of faſhion. If you think it worth while to ſacrifice that to the poſſeſſion of me, I am yours; if not, forget my weakneſs, and let this remain an eternal ſecret between you and

ARABELLA HUNT.

At the reading of this, Jones was put into a violent flutter. His fortune was then at a very low ebb, the ſource being ſtopt from which hitherto he had been ſupplied. Of all he had received from lady Bellaſton not above five guineas remained, and that very morning he had been dunned by a tradeſman for twice that ſum. His honourable miſtreſs was in the hands of her father, and he had ſcarce any hopes ever to get her out of them again. To be ſubſiſted at her expence from that little fortune ſhe had independent of her father, went much againſt the delicacy both of his pride and his love. This lady's fortune would have been exceedingly convenient to him, and he could have no objection to her in any

reſpect. On the contrary, he liked her as well as he did any woman except Sophia. But to abandon Sophia, and marry another, that was impoſſible; he could not think of it upon any account. Yet why ſhould he not, ſince it was plain ſhe could not be his? Would it not be kinder to her, than to continue her longer engaged in a hopeleſs paſſion for him? Ought he not to do ſo in friendſhip to her? This notion prevailed ſome moments, and he had almoſt determined to be falſe to her from a high point of honour; but that refinement was not able to ſtand very long againſt the voice of nature, which cried in his heart, that ſuch friendſhip was treaſon to love. At laſt he called for pen, ink, and paper, and writ as follows to Mrs. Hunt:

MADAM,

It would be but a poor return to the favour you have done me, to ſacrifice any gallantry to the poſſeſſion of you, and I would certainly do it, though I were not diſengaged, as at preſent I am, from any affair of that kind. But I ſhould not be the honeſt man you think me, if I did not tell you, that my affections are engaged to another, who is a woman of virtue, and one that I never can leave, though it is probable I ſhall never poſſeſs her. God forbid that in return of your kindneſs to me, I ſhould do you ſuch an injury, as to give you my hand, when

I cannot give my heart. No, I had much rather ſtarve than be guilty of that. Even though my miſtreſs were married to another, I would not marry you unleſs my heart had entirely effaced all impreſſions of her. Be aſſured that your ſecret was not more ſafe in your own breaſt, than in that of

your moſt obliged, and
grateful humble ſervant,
T. Jones.

When our hero had finiſhed and ſent this letter, he went to his ſcrutore, took out Miſs Weſtern's muff, kiſſed it ſeveral times, and then ſtrutted ſome turns about his room, with more ſatisfaction of mind than ever any Iriſhman felt in carrying off a fortune of fifty thouſand pounds.

CHAP. XII.

A diſcovery made by Partridge.

While Jones was exulting in the conſciouſneſs of his integrity, Partridge came capering into the room, as was his cuſtom when he brought, or he fancied he brought, any good tidings. He had been diſpatched that morning by his maſter, with orders to endeavour, by the ſervants of lady Bellaſton, or by any other means, to diſcover whither Sophia

had been conveyed; and he now returned, and with a joyful countenance told our hero, that he had found the loſt bird. I have ſeen, Sir, ſays he, Black George, the game-keeper, who is one of the ſervants whom the 'ſquire hath brought with him to town. I knew him preſently, though I have not ſeen him theſe ſeveral years; but you know, Sir, he is a very remarkable man, or to uſe a purer phraſe, he hath a moſt remarkable beard, the largeſt and blackeſt I ever ſaw. It was ſome time however before Black George could recollect me. —Well, but what is your good news? cries Jones. What do you know of my Sophia? — You ſhall know preſently, Sir, anſwered Partridge, I am coming to it as faſt as I can. — You are ſo impatient, Sir, you would came at the infinitive mood, before you can get to the imperative. As I was ſaying, Sir, it was ſome time before he recollected my face. — Confound your face, cries Jones; what of my Sophia? — Nay, Sir, anſwered Partridge, I know nothing more of Madam Sophia, than what I am going to tell you; and I ſhould have told you all before this if you had not interrupted me; but if you look ſo angry at me, you will frighten all of it out of my head, or to uſe a purer phraſe, out of my memory. I never ſaw you look ſo angry ſince the day we left Upton, which I ſhall remember if I was to live a thouſand years. —- Well, pray go on in your own way, ſaid Jones, you are reſolved to make me mad, I find. Not for

the world, anſwered Partridge, I have ſuffered enough for that already; which, as I ſaid, I ſhall bear in my remembrance the longeſt day I have to live. — Well, but Black George? cries Jones. —Well, Sir, as I was ſaying, it was a long time before he could recollect me; for indeed I am very much altered ſince I ſaw him. *Non ſum qualis eram.* I have had troubles in the world, and nothing alters a man ſo much as grief. I have heard it will change the colour of a man's hair in a night. However, at laſt, know me he did, that's ſure enough; for we are both of an age, and were at the ſame charity-ſchool. George was a great dunce, but no matter for that; all men do not thrive in the world according to their learning. I am ſure I have reaſon to ſay ſo; but it will be all one a thouſand years hence. Well, Sir, — where was I? — O — well, we no ſooner knew each other, than after many hearty ſhakes by the hand, we agreed to go to an alehouſe and take a pot, and by good luck the beer was ſome of the beſt I have met with ſince I have been in town. —Now, Sir, I am coming to the point; for no ſooner did I name you, and told him, that you and I came to town together, and had lived together ever ſince, than he called for another pot, and ſwore he would drink to your health; and indeed he drank your health ſo heartily, that I was overjoyed to ſee there was ſo much gratitude left in the world: and after we had emptied that pot, I ſaid,

I would be my pot too, and ſo we drank another to your health; and then I made haſte home to tell you the news.

What news? cries Jones, you have not mentioned a word of my Sophia! — Bleſs me! I had like to have forgot that. Indeed we mentioned a great deal about young Madam Weſtern, and George told me all; that Mr. Blifil is coming to town in order to be married to her. He had beſt make haſte then, ſays I, or ſomebody will have her before he comes; and indeed, ſays I, Mr. Seagrim, it is a thouſand pities ſomebody ſhould not have her; for he certainly loves her above all the women in the world. I would have both you and ſhe know, that it is not for her fortune he follows her; for I can aſſure you as to matter of that, there is another lady, one of much greater quality and fortune than ſhe can pretend to, who is ſo fond of ſomebody, that ſhe comes after him day and night.

Here Jones fell into a paſſion with Partridge, for having, as he ſaid, betrayed him; but the poor fellow anſwered, he had mentioned no name: Beſides, Sir, ſaid he, I can aſſure you, George is ſincerely your friend, and wiſhed Mr. Blifil at the devil more than once; nay, he ſaid, he would do any thing in his power upon earth to ſerve you; and ſo I am convinced he will. — Betray you indeed! why I queſtion whether you have a better friend than George upon earth, except myſelf, or one that would go farther to ſerve you.

Well, ſays Jones, a little pacified, you ſay this fellow, who I believe indeed is enough inclined to be my friend, lives in the ſame houſe with Sophia?

In the ſame houſe? anſwered Partridge; why, Sir, he is one of the ſervants of the family, and very well dreſt I promiſe you he is; if it was not for his black beard, you would hardly know him.

One ſervice then at leaſt he may do me, ſays Jones; ſure he can certainly convey a letter to my Sophia.

You have hit the nail *ad unguem*, cries Partridge. How came I not to think of it? I will engage he ſhall do it upon the very firſt mentioning.

Well then, ſaid Jones, do you leave me at preſent, and I will write a letter which you ſhall deliver to him to morrow morning; for I ſuppoſe you know where to find him.

O yes, Sir, anſwered Partridge, I ſhall certainly find him again; there is no fear of that. The liquor is too good for him to ſtay away long. I make no doubt but he will be there every day he ſtays in town.

So you don't know the ſtreet then where my Sophia is lodged? cries Jones.

Indeed, Sir, I do, ſays Partridge.

What is the name of the ſtreet? cries Jones.

The name, Sir, why here, Sir, juſt by, anſwered Partridge, not above a ſtreet or two off. I don't indeed know the very name; for as he never told me,

me, if I had aſked, you know it might have put ſome ſuſpicion into his head. No, no, Sir, let me alone for that. I am too cunning for that, I promiſe you.

Thou art moſt wonderfully cunning indeed, replied Jones; however I will write to my charmer, ſince I believe you will be cunning enough to find him to-morrow at the alehouſe.

And now having diſmiſſed the ſagacious Partridge, Mr. Jones ſat himſelf down to write, in which employment we ſhall leave him for a time. And here we put an end to the fifteenth book.

THE HISTORY OF A FOUNDLING.

BOOK XVI.

Containing the ſpace of five days.

CHAP. I.

Of Prologues.

I HAVE heard of a dramatic writer who uſed to ſay, he would rather write a play than a prologue; in like manner, I think, I can with leſs pains write one of the books of this hiſtory, than the prefatory chapter to each of them.

To ſay the truth, I believe many a hearty curſe hath been devoted on the head of the author, who firſt inſtituted the method of prefixing to his play that portion of matter which is called the prologue; and which at firſt was part of the piece itſelf, but of latter years hath had uſually ſo little connection

with the drama before which it ſtands, that the prologue to one play might as well ſerve for any other. Thoſe indeed of more modern date, ſeem all to be written on the ſame three topics. viz. an abuſe of the taſte of the town, a condemnation of all cotemporary authors, and an eulogium on the performance juſt about to be repreſented. The ſentiments in all theſe are very little varied, nor is it poſſible they ſhould; and indeed I have often wondered at the great invention of authors, who have been capable of finding ſuch various phraſes to expreſs the ſame thing.

In like manner I apprehend, ſome future hiſtorian (if any one ſhall do me the honour of imitating my manner) will, after much ſcratching his pate, beſtow ſome good wiſhes on my memory, for having firſt eſtabliſhed theſe ſeveral initial chapters; moſt of which, like modern prologues, may as properly be prefixed to any other book in this hiſtory as to that which they introduce, or indeed to any other hiſtory as to this.

But however authors may ſuffer by either of theſe inventions, the reader will find ſufficient emolument in the one, as the ſpectator hath long found in the other.

Firſt, it is well known, that the prologue ſerves the critic for an opportunity to try his faculty of hiſſing, and to tune his cat-call to the beſt advantage; by which means, I have known thoſe muſical inſtruments ſo

well prepared, that they have been able to play in full concert at the firſt riſing of the curtain.

The ſame advantages may be drawn from theſe chapters, in which the critic will be always ſure of meeting with ſomething that may ſerve as a whetſtone to his noble ſpirit; ſo that he may fall with a more hungry appetite for cenſure on the hiſtory itſelf. And here his ſagacity muſt make it needleſs to obſerve how artfully theſe chapters are calculated for that excellent purpoſe; for in theſe we have always taken care to interſperſe ſomewhat of the ſour or acid kind, in order to ſharpen and ſtimulate the ſaid ſpirit of criticiſm.

Again, the indolent reader, as well as ſpectator, finds great advantage from both theſe; for as they are not obliged either to ſee the one, or read the others, and both the play and the book are thus protracted, by the former they have a quarter of an hour longer allowed them to ſit at dinner, and by the latter they have the advantage of beginning to read at the fourth or fifth page inſtead of the firſt, a matter by no means of trivial conſequence to perſons who read books with no other view than to ſay they have read them, a more general motive to reading than is commonly imagined; and from which not only law-books, and good books, but the pages of Homer and Virgil, of Swift and Cervantes, have been often turned over.

Many other are the emoluments which ariſe from

both theſe, but they are for the moſt part ſo obvious that we ſhall not at preſent ſtay to enumerate them; eſpecially ſince it occurs to us that the principal merit of both the prologue and the preface is that they be ſhort.

CHAP. II.

A whimſical adventure which befel the 'ſquire, with the diſtreſſed ſituation of Sophia.

WE muſt now convey the reader to Mr. Weſtern's lodgings, which were in Piccadilly, where he was placed by the recommendation of the landlord at the Hercules Pillars at Hyde-Park Corner; for at that inn, which was the firſt he ſaw on his arrival in town, he placed his horſes, and in thoſe lodgings, which were the firſt he heard of, he depoſited himſelf.

Here when Sophia alighted from the hackney-coach, which brought her from the houſe of lady Bellaſton, ſhe deſired to retire to the apartment provided for her, to which her father very readily agreed, and whither he attended her himſelf. A ſhort dialogue, neither very material nor pleaſant to relate minutely, then paſſed between them, in which he preſſed her vehemently to give her conſent to the marriage with Blifil, who, as he acquainted her, was to be in town in a few days; but inſtead of complying, ſhe gave a more peremptory and reſolute refuſal than ſhe had ever done before. This ſo incenſed her father,

that after many bitter vows that he would force her to have him whether ſhe would or no, he departed from her with many hard words and curſes, locked the door, and put the key into his pocket.

While Sophia was left with no other company than what attend the cloſeſt ſtate priſoner, namely, fire and candle, the 'ſquire ſat down to regale himſelf over a bottle of wine, with his parſon and the landlord of the Hercules Pillars, who, as the 'ſquire ſaid, would make an excellent third man, and could inform them of the news of the town, and how affairs went; for to be ſure, ſays he, he knows a great deal, ſince the horſes of many of the quality ſtand at his houſe.

In this agreeable ſociety, Mr. Weſtern paſt that evening and great part of the ſucceeding day, during which period nothing happened of ſufficient conſequence to find a place in this hiſtory. All this time Sophia paſt by herſelf; for her father ſwore, ſhe ſhould never come out of her chamber alive, unleſs ſhe firſt conſented to marry Blifil; nor did he ever ſuffer the door to be unlocked unleſs to convey her food, on which occaſions he always attended himſelf.

The ſecond morning after his arrival, while he and the parſon were at breakfaſt together on a toaſt and a tankard, he was informed that a gentleman was below to wait on him.

A gentleman! quoth the 'ſquire, who the devil can he be? Do, doctor, go down and ſee who 'tis. Mr. Blifil can hardly be come to town yet. — Go down,

do, and know what his buſineſs is.

The doctor returned with an account that it was a very well dreſt man, and by the ribbon in his hat, he took him for an officer of the army; that he ſaid, he had ſome particular buſineſs, which he could deliver to none but Mr. Weſtern himſelf.

An officer! cries the 'ſquire, what can any ſuch fellow ha to do with me? If he wants an order for baggage-waggons, I am no juſtice of peace here, nor can I grant a warrant. — Let un come up then, if he muſt ſpeak to me.

A very genteel man now entered the room; who having made his compliments to the 'ſquire, and deſired the favour of being alone with him, delivered himſelf as follows:

Sir, I come to wait upon you by the command of my lord Fellamar; but with a very different meſſage from what I ſuppoſe you expect, after what paſt the other night.

My lord who? cries the 'ſquire, I never heard the name o'un.

His lordſhip, ſaid the gentleman, is willing to impute every thing to the effect of liquor, and the moſt trifling acknowledgment of that kind will ſet every thing right; for as he hath the moſt violent attachment to your daughter, you, Sir, are the laſt perſon upon earth, from whom he would reſent an affront; and happy is it for you both that he hath given ſuch public demonſtrations of his courage, as to be able to put up

an affair of this kind, without danger of any imputation on his honour. All he desires, therefore, is, that you will, before me, make some acknowledgment; the slightest in the world will be sufficient; and he intends this afternoon to pay his respects to you, in order to obtain your leave of visiting the young lady on the footing of a lover.

I don't understand much of what you say, Sir, said the 'squire; but I suppose, by what you talk about my daughter, that this is the lord which my cousin lady Bellaston mentioned to me, and said something about his courting my daughter. If so be, that how, that be the case — you may give my service to his lordship, and tell un the girl is disposed of already.

Perhaps, Sir, said the gentleman, you are not sufficiently appriſed of the greatness of this offer. I believe such a person, title, and fortune, would be no where refused.

Lookee, Sir, answered the 'squire, to be very plain, my daughter is bespoke already; but if she was not, I would not marry her to a lord upon any account; I hate all lords; they are a parcel of courtiers and Hanoverians, and I will ha nothing to do with them.

Well, Sir, said the gentleman, if that is your resolution, the message I am to deliver to you, is, that my lord desires the favour of your company this morning in Hyde-Park.

You may tell my lord, anſwered the 'ſquire, that I am buſy, and cannot come. I have enough to look after at home, and can't ſtir abroad on any account.

I am ſure, Sir, quoth the other, you are too much a gentleman to ſend ſuch a meſſage; you will not, I am convinced, have it ſaid of you, that after having affronted a noble peer, you refuſe him ſatisfaction. His lordſhip would have been willing, from his great regard to the young lady, to have made up matters in another way; but unleſs he is to look on you as a father, his honour will not ſuffer his putting up ſuch an indignity as you muſt be ſenſible you offered him.

I offered him! cries the 'ſquire; it is a d—n'd lie, I never offered him any thing.

Upon theſe words the gentleman returned a very ſhort verbal rebuke, and this he accompanied at the ſame time with ſome manual remonſtrances, which no ſooner reached the ears of Mr. Weſtern, than that worthy 'ſquire began to caper very briſkly about the room, bellowing at the ſame time with all his might, as if deſirous to ſummon a greater number of ſpectators to behold his agility.

The parſon, who had left great part of the tankard unfiniſhed, was not retired far; he immediately attended, therefore, on the 'ſquire's vociferation, crying: Bleſs me! Sir, what's the matter? — Matter? quoth the 'ſquire, here's a highwayman, I believe,

who wants to rob and murder me — for he hath fallen upon me with that ſtick there in his hand, when I wiſh I may be d—n'd if I gid un the leaſt provocation.

How, Sir, ſaid the captain, did you not tell me I ly'd?

No, as I hope to be ſaved, anſwered the 'ſquire. I believe I might ſay, 'twas a lie that I had offered any affront to my lord, — but I never ſaid the word you lie. — I underſtand myſelf better, and you might have underſtood yourſelf better than to fall upon a naked man. If I had a ſtick in my hand, you would not ha dared to ſtrike me. I'd ha knocked thy lantern jaws about thy ears. Come down into yard this minute, and I'll take a bout with thee at ſingle ſtick for a broken head, that I will; or I will go into a naked room and box thee for a belly-full. At unt half a man, at unt I'm ſure.

The captain, with ſome indignation, replied: I ſee, Sir, you are below my notice, and I ſhall inform his lordſhip you are below his. — I am ſorry I have dirtied my fingers with you. — At which words he withdrew, the parſon interpoſing to prevent the 'ſquire from ſtopping him, in which he eaſily prevailed, as the other, though he made ſome efforts for the purpoſe, did not ſeem very violently bent on ſucceſs. However, when the captain was departed, the 'ſquire ſent many curſes and ſome menaces after him; but

as theſe did not ſet out from his lips till the officer was at the bottom of the ſtairs, and grew louder and louder as he was more and more remote, they did not reach his ears, or at leaſt did not retard his departure.

Poor Sophia however, who, in her priſon, heard all her father's outcries from firſt to laſt, began now firſt to thunder with her foot, and afterwards to ſcream as loudly as the old gentleman himſelf had done before, though in a much ſweeter voice. Theſe ſcreams ſoon ſilenced the 'ſquire, and turned all his conſideration towards his daughter, whom he loved ſo tenderly, that the leaſt apprehenſion of any harm happening to her, threw him preſently into agonies: for except in that ſingle inſtance in which the whole future happineſs of her life was concerned, ſhe was ſovereign miſtreſs of his inclinations.

Having ended his rage againſt the captain, with ſwearing, he would take the law of him, the 'ſquire now mounted up ſtairs to Sophia, whom, as ſoon as he had unlocked and opened the door, he found all pale and breathleſs. The moment however that ſhe ſaw her father, ſhe collected all her ſpirits, and catching him hold by the hand, ſhe cry'd paſſionately: O my dear Sir, I am almoſt frightened to death; I hope to heaven no harm hath happened to you.

No, no, cries the 'ſquire, no great harm. The raſcal hath not hurt me much, but rat me if I don't ha the la o'un. Pray, dear Sir, ſays ſhe, tell me

what's the matter, who is it that hath inſulted you? I don't know the name o'un, anſwered Weſtern, ſome officer fellow, I ſuppoſe, that we are to pay for beating us, but I'll make him pay this bout, if the raſcal hath got any thing, which I ſuppoſe he hath not. For thof he was dreſt out ſo vine, I queſtion whether he had got a voot of land in the world. But, dear Sir, cries ſhe, what was the occaſion of your quarrel? What ſhould it be, Sophy? anſwered the 'ſquire, but about you, Sophy. All my misfortunes are about you; you will be the death of your poor vather at laſt. Here's a varlet of a lord, the lord knows who forſooth! who hath taan a liking to you, and becauſe I would not gee un my conſent, he ſent me a kallenge. Come, do be a good girl, Sophy, and put an end to all your vather's troubles; come do, conſent to ha un; he will be in town within this day or two; do but promiſe me to marry un as ſoon as he comes, and you will make me the happieſt man in the world, and I will make you the happieſt woman; you ſhall ha the fineſt cloaths in London, and the fineſt jewels, and a coach and ſix at your command. I promiſed Allworthy already to gee up half my eſtate. — Odrabbit it! I ſhould hardly ſtick at giving up the whole. Will my papa be ſo kind, ſays ſhe, as to hear me ſpeak? Why wout aſk, Sophy? cries he, when doſt know that I had rather hear thy voice, than the muſick of the beſt pack of dogs in England. — Hear thee, my dear

little girl! I hope I ſhall hear thee as long as I live: for if ever I was to loſe that pleaſure, I would not gee a braſs varden to live a moment longer. Indeed, Sophy, you do not know how I love you, indeed you don't, or you never could ha run away and left your poor vather, who hath no other joy, no other comfort upon earth but his little Sophy. At theſe words the tears ſtood in his eyes; and Sophia, (with the tears ſtreaming from hers) anſwered: Indeed, my dear papa, I know you have loved me tenderly, and heaven is my witneſs how ſincerely I have returned your affection; nor could any thing but an apprehenſion of being forced into the arms of this man, have driven me to run from a father whom I love ſo paſſionately, that I would, with pleaſure, ſacrifice my life to his happineſs; nay, I have endeavoured to reaſon myſelf into doing more, and had almoſt worked up a reſolution, to endure the moſt miſerable of all lives, to comply with your inclination. It was that reſolution alone to which I could not force my mind; nor can I ever. Here the 'ſquire began to look wild, and the foam appeared at his lips, which Sophia obſerving, begged to be heard out, and then proceeded: If my father's life, his health, or any real happineſs of his was at ſtake, here ſtands your reſolved daughter; may heaven blaſt me, if there is a miſery I would not ſuffer to preſerve you. — No, that moſt deteſted, moſt loathſome of all lots would I embrace. I would

give my hand to Blifil for your ſake. — I tell thee, it will preſerve me, anſwers the father; it will gee me health, happineſs, life, every thing. — Upon my ſoul I ſhall die if doſt refuſe me; I ſhall break my heart, I ſhall upon my ſoul. — Is it poſſible, ſays ſhe, you can have ſuch a deſire to make me miſerable? I tell thee noa, anſwered he loudly, my whole deſire is to make thee happy; me! d—n me if there is a thing upon earth I would not do to ſee thee happy! — And will not my dear papa allow me to have the leaſt knowledge of what will make me ſo? If it be true that happineſs conſiſts in opinion; what muſt be my condition, when I ſhall think myſelf the moſt miſerable of all the wretches upon earth? Better think yourſelf ſo, ſaid he, than know it by being married to a poor baſtardly vagabond. If it will content you, Sir, ſaid Sophia, I will give you the moſt ſolemn promiſe never to marry him nor any other while my papa lives, without his conſent. Let me dedicate my whole life to your ſervice; let me be again your poor Sophy, and my whole buſineſs and pleaſure be, as it hath been, to pleaſe and divert you. Lookee, Sophy, anſwered the 'ſquire, I am not to be chouſed in this manner. Your aunt Weſtern would then have reaſon to think me the fool ſhe doth. No, no, Sophy, I'd ha you to know I ha got more wiſdom, and know more of the world than to take the word of a woman in a matter where a man is concerned. How, Sir, have

I deſerved this want of confidence? ſaid ſhe. Have I ever broke a ſingle promiſe to you? or have I ever been found guilty of a falſhood from my cradle? Lookee, Sophy, cries he, that's neither here nor there. I am determined upon this match, and ha him you ſhall, d—n me, if ſhat unt. D—n me if ſhat unt, though doſt hang thyſelf the next morning. At repeating which words he clenched his fiſt, knit his brows, bit his lips, and thundered ſo loud, that the poor afflicted, terrified Sophia ſunk trembling into her chair; and had not a flood of tears immediately come to her relief, perhaps worſe had followed.

Weſtern beheld the deplorable condition of his daughter with no more contrition or remorſe, than the turnkey of Newgate feels at viewing the agonies of a tender wife, when taking her laſt farewell of her condemned huſband; or rather he looked down on her with the ſame emotions which ariſe in an honeſt fair tradeſman, who ſees his debtor dragged to priſon for 10 l. which, though a juſt debt, the wretch is wickedly unable to pay. Or, to hit the caſe ſtill more nearly, he felt the ſame compunction with a bawd, when ſome poor innocent whom ſhe hath enſnared into her hands, falls into fits at the firſt propoſal of what is called ſeeing company. Indeed this reſemblance would be exact, was it not that the bawd hath an intereſt in what ſhe doth; and the father, though perhaps he may blindly think otherwiſe, can in reality have none in urging his

daughter to almoſt an equal proſtitution.

In this condition he left his poor Sophia, and departing with a very vulgar obſervation on the effect of tears, he locked the room, and returned to the parſon, who ſaid every thing he durſt in behalf of the young lady, which, though perhaps it was not quite ſo much as his duty required, yet was it ſufficient to throw the 'ſquire into a violent rage, and into many indecent reflections on the whole body of the clergy, which we have too great an honour for that ſacred function to commit to paper.

CHAP. III.

What happened to Sophia during her confinement.

THE landlady of the houſe where the 'ſquire lodged had begun very early to entertain a ſtrange opinion of her gueſts. However, as ſhe was informed that the 'ſquire was a man of a vaſt fortune, and as ſhe had taken care to exact a very extraordinary price for her rooms, ſhe did not think proper to give any offence; for though ſhe was not without ſome concern for the confinement of poor Sophia, of whoſe great ſweetneſs of temper and affability, the maid of the houſe had made ſo favourable a report, which was confirmed by all the 'ſquire's ſervants,

ſervants, yet ſhe had much more concern for her own intereſt, than to provoke one, whom, as ſhe ſaid, ſhe perceived to be a very haſtiſh kind of a gentleman.

Though Sophia eat but little, yet ſhe was regularly ſerved with her meals; indeed I believe if ſhe had liked any one rarity, that the 'ſquire, however angry, would have ſpared neither pains nor coſt to have procured it for her; ſince, however ſtrange it may appear to ſome of my readers, he really doated on his daughter, and to give her any kind of pleaſure was the higheſt ſatisfaction of his life.

The dinner hour being arrived, Black George carried her up a pullet, the 'ſquire himſelf (for he had ſworn not to part with the key) attending the door. As George depoſited the diſh, ſome compliments paſſed between him and Sophia (for he had not ſeen her ſince ſhe left the country, and ſhe treated every ſervant with more reſpect than ſome perſons ſhew to thoſe who are in a very ſlight degree their inferiors). Sophia would have had him take the pullet back, ſaying, ſhe could not eat; but George begged her to try, and particularly recommended to her the eggs, of which he ſaid it was full.

All this time the 'ſquire was waiting at the door; but George was a great favourite with his maſter, as he was employed in concerns of the higheſt nature, namely about the game, and was accuſtomed to take many liberties. He had officiouſly carried up the

dinner, being, as he ſaid, very deſirous to ſee his young lady; he made, therefore, no ſcruple of keeping his maſter ſtanding above ten minutes, while civilities were paſſing between him and Sophia; for which he received only a good-humoured rebuke at the door when he returned.

The eggs of pullets, partridges, pheaſants, *&c.* were, as George well knew, the moſt favourite dainties of Sophia. It was, therefore, no wonder, that he who was a very good-natured fellow, ſhould take care to ſupply her with this kind of delicacy, at a time when all the ſervants in the houſe were afraid ſhe would be ſtarved; for ſhe had ſcarce ſwallowed a ſingle morſel in the laſt forty hours.

Though vexation hath not the ſame effect on all perſons, as it uſually hath on a widow, whoſe appetite it often renders ſharper than it can be rendered by the air on Banſted Downs, or Saliſbury Plain; yet the ſublimeſt grief, notwithſtanding what ſome people may ſay to the contrary, will eat at laſt. And Sophia herſelf, after ſome little conſideration, began to diſſect the fowl, which ſhe found to be as full of eggs as George had reported.

But if ſhe was pleaſed with theſe, it contained ſomething which would have delighted the Royal Society much more; for if a fowl with three legs be ſo invaluable a curioſity, when perhaps time hath produced a thouſand ſuch, at what price ſhall we eſteem a bird which ſo totally contradicts all the

laws of animal œconomy, as to contain a letter in its belly? Ovid tells us of a flower into which Hyacinthus was metamorphoſed, that bears letters on its leaves, which Virgil recommended as a miracle to the Royal Society of his day; but no age nor nation hath ever recorded a bird with a letter in its maw.

But though a miracle of this kind might have engaged all the *Academies des Sciences* in Europe, and perhaps in a fruitleſs enquiry; yet the reader, by barely recollecting the laſt dialogue which paſſed between Meſſieurs Jones and Partridge, will be very eaſily ſatisfied from whence this letter came, and how it found its paſſage into the fowl.

Sophia, notwithſtanding her long faſt, and notwithſtanding her favourite diſh was there before her, no ſooner ſaw the letter than ſhe immediately ſnatched it up, tore it open, and read as follows:

Madam,

Was I not ſenſible to whom I have the honour of writing, I ſhould endeavour, however difficult, to paint the horrors of my mind, at the account brought me by Mrs. Honour: but as tenderneſs alone can have any true idea of the pangs which tenderneſs is capable of feeling; ſo can this moſt amiable quality which my Sophia poſſeſſes in the moſt eminent degree, ſufficiently inform her what her Jones muſt have

ſuffered on this melancholy occaſion. Is there a circumſtance in the world which can heighten my agonies, when I hear of any misfortune which hath befallen you? Surely there is one only, and with that I am accurſed. It is, my Sophia, the dreadful conſideration that I am myſelf the wretched cauſe. Perhaps I here do myſelf too much honour; but none will envy me an honour which coſts me ſo extremely dear. Pardon me this preſumption, and pardon me a greater ſtill, if I aſk you whether my advice, my aſſiſtance, my preſence, my abſence, my death, or my tortures can bring you any relief? Can the moſt perfect admiration, the moſt watchful obſervance, the moſt ardent love, the moſt melting tenderneſs, the moſt reſigned ſubmiſſion to your will, make you amends for what you are to ſacrifice to my happineſs? If they can, fly, my lovely angel, to thoſe arms which are ever open to receive and protect you; and to which, whether you bring yourſelf alone, or the riches of the world with you, is, in my opinion, an alternative not worth regarding. If, on the contrary, wiſdom ſhall predominate, and, on the moſt mature reflexion, inform you, that the ſacrifice is too great; and if there be no way left to reconcile you to your father, and reſtore the peace of your dear mind, but by abandoning me, I conjure you drive me for ever from your thoughts, exert your reſolution, and let no compaſſion for my ſufferings bear the leaſt weight in that tender boſom. Believe me, Madam, I ſo ſincerely love you

better than myſelf, that my great and principal end is your happineſs. My firſt wiſh (why would not fortune indulge me in it?) was, and pardon me if I ſay, ſtill is, to ſee you every moment the happieſt of women; my ſecond wiſh is to hear you are ſo; but no miſery on earth can equal mine, while I think you owe an uneaſy moment to him who is,

Madam,

in every ſenſe, and to every purpoſe,
your devoted
THOMAS JONES.

What Sophia ſaid, or did, or thought upon this letter, how often ſhe read it, or whether more than once, ſhall all be left to our reader's imagination. The anſwer to it he may perhaps ſee hereafter, but not at preſent; for this reaſon, among others, that ſhe did not now write any, and that for ſeveral good cauſes, one of which was this, that ſhe had no paper, pen, nor ink.

In the evening, while Sophia was meditating on the letter ſhe had received, or on ſomething elſe, a violent noiſe from below diſturbed her meditations. This noiſe was no other than a round bout at altercation between two perſons. One of the combatants, by his voice, ſhe immediately diſtinguiſhed to be her father; but ſhe did not ſo

ſoon diſcover the ſhriller pipes to belong to the organ of her aunt Weſtern, who was juſt arrived in town, and having, by means of one of her ſervants, who ſtopt at the Hercules Pillars, learnt where her brother lodged, ſhe drove directly to his lodgings.

We ſhall, therefore, take our leave at preſent of Sophia, and, with our uſual good-breeding, attend her ladyſhip.

CHAP. IV.

In which Sophia is delivered from her confinement.

THE 'ſquire and the parſon (for the landlord was now otherwiſe engaged) were ſmoaking their pipes together, when the arrival of the lady was firſt ſignified. The 'ſquire no ſooner heard her name, than he immediately ran down to uſher her up ſtairs; for he was a great obſerver of ſuch ceremonials, eſpecially to his ſiſter, of whom he ſtood more in awe than of any other human creature, though he never would own this, nor did he perhaps know it himſelf.

Mrs. Weſtern, on her arrival in the dining-room, having flung herſelf into a chair, began thus to harangue: Well, ſurely, no one ever had ſuch an intolerable journey. I think the roads, ſince ſo many turnpike acts, are grown worſe than ever.

La, brother, how could you get into this odious place? No perſon of condition, I dare ſwear, ever ſet foot here before. I don't know, cries the 'ſquire, I think they do well enough; it was landlord recommended them. I thought, as he knew moſt of the quality, he could beſt ſhew me where to get among um. Well, and where's my niece? ſays the lady. Have you been to wait upon lady Bellaſton yet? Ay, ay, cries the 'ſquire, your niece is ſafe enough; ſhe is up ſtairs in chamber. How, anſwered the lady, is my niece in this houſe, and doth ſhe not know of my being here? No, nobody can well get to her, ſays the 'ſquire, for ſhe is under lock and key. I ha her ſafe; I vetched her from my lady couſin the firſt night I came to town, and I ha taken care o'her ever ſince; ſhe is as ſecure as a fox in a bag, I promiſe you. Good heaven! returned Mrs. Weſtern, what do I hear! I thought what a fine piece of work would be the conſequence of my conſent to your coming to town yourſelf; nay, it was indeed your own headſtrong will, nor can I charge myſelf with having ever conſented to it. Did not you promiſe me, brother, that you would take none of theſe headſtrong meaſures? Was it not by theſe headſtrong meaſures that you forced my niece to run away from you in the country? Have you a mind to oblige her to take ſuch another ſtep? Z—ds and the devil, cries the 'ſquire, daſhing his pipe on the ground, did ever mortal hear the like? when I

expected you would have commended me for all I ha done, to be fallen upon in this manner! How! brother, ſaid the lady, have I ever given you the leaſt reaſon to imagine I ſhould commend you for locking up your daughter? Have I not often told you, that women in a free country are not to be treated with ſuch arbitrary power? We are as free as the men, and I heartily wiſh I could not ſay we deſerve that freedom better. If you expect I ſhould ſtay a moment longer in this wretched houſe, or that I ſhould ever own you again as my relation, or that I ſhould ever trouble myſelf again with the affairs of your family, I inſiſt upon it that my niece be ſet at liberty this inſtant. This ſhe ſpoke with ſo commanding an air, ſtanding with her back to the fire, with one hand behind her, and a pinch of ſnuff in the other, that I queſtion whether Thaleſtris at the head of her Amazons ever made a more tremendous figure. It is no wonder, therefore, that the poor 'ſquire was not proof againſt the awe which ſhe inſpired. There, he cried, throwing down the key, there it is, do whatever you pleaſe. I intended only to ha kept her up till Blifil came to town, which can't be long; and now if any harm happens in the mean time, remember who is to be blamed for it.

I will anſwer it with my life, cried Mrs. Weſtern. But I ſhall not intermeddle at all, unleſs upon one condition, and that is, that you will commit the

whole entirely to my care, without taking any one meaſure yourſelf, unleſs I ſhall eventually appoint you to act. If you ratify theſe preliminaries, brother, I yet will endeavour to preſerve the honour of your family; if not, I ſhall continue in a neutral ſtate.

I pray you, good Sir, ſaid the parſon, permit yourſelf this once to be admoniſhed by her ladyſhip; peradventure by communing with young Madam Sophia, ſhe will effect more than you have been able to perpetrate by more rigorous meaſures.

What doſt thee open upon me? cries the 'ſquire. If thee doſt begin to babble, I ſhall whip thee in preſently.

Fie, brother, anſwered the lady, is this language to a clergyman? Mr. Supple is a man of ſenſe, and gives you the beſt advice; and the whole world, I believe, will concur in his opinion; but I muſt tell you, I expect an immediate anſwer to my cathegorical propoſals. Either cede your daughter to my diſpoſal, or take her wholly to your own ſurpriſing diſcretion, and then I here, before Mr. Supple, evacuate the garriſon, and renounce you and family for ever.

I pray you, let me be a mediator, cries the parſon; let me ſupplicate you ——

Why there lies the key on the table, cries the 'ſquire. She may take un up, if ſhe pleaſes; who hinders her?

No, brother, anſwered the lady, I inſiſt on the formality of its being delivered me, with a full

ratification of all the conceſſions ſtipulated.

Why, then I will deliver it to you. — There 'tis, cries the 'ſquire. I am ſure, ſiſter, you can't accuſe me of ever denying to truſt my daughter to you. She hath lived wi' you a whole year and muore to a time, without my ever zeeing her.

And it would have been happy for her, anſwered the lady, if ſhe had always lived with me. Nothing of this kind would have happened under my eye.

Ay, certainly, cries he, I only am to blame.

Why, you are to blame, brother, anſwered ſhe; I have been often obliged to tell you ſo, and ſhall always be obliged to tell you ſo. However, I hope you will now amend, and gather ſo much experience from paſt errors, as not to defeat my wiſeſt machinations by your blunders. Indeed, brother, you are not qualified for theſe negotiations. All your whole ſcheme of politics is wrong. I once more, therefore, inſiſt, that you do not intermeddle. Remember only what is paſt. —

Z— ds and bl — d, ſiſter, cries the 'ſquire. What would you ha me ſay? You are enough to provoke the devil.

There now, ſaid ſhe, juſt according to the old cuſtom. I ſee, brother, there is no talking to you. I will appeal to Mr. Supple, who is a man of ſenſe, if I ſaid any thing, which could put any human creature into a paſſion; but you are ſo wrong-headed every way.

Let me beg you, Madam, ſaid the parſon, not to irritate his worſhip.

Irritate him? ſaid the lady. — Sure you are as great a fool as himſelf. Well, brother, ſince you have promiſed not to interfere, I will once more undertake the management of my niece. Lord have mercy upon all affairs which are under the directions of men. The head of one woman is worth a thouſand of yours. And now, having ſummoned a ſervant to ſhew her to Sophia, ſhe departed, bearing the key with her.

She was no ſooner gone, than the 'ſquire (having firſt ſhut the door) ejaculated twenty bitches, and as many hearty curſes againſt her, not ſparing himſelf for having ever thought of her eſtate; but added: Now one hath been a ſlave ſo long, it would be a pity to loſe it at laſt, for want of holding out a little longer. The bitch can't live for ever, and I know I am down for it upon the will.

The parſon greatly commended this reſolution; and now the 'ſquire having ordered in another bottle, which was his uſual method when any thing either pleaſed or vexed him, did, by drinking plentifully of this medicinal julap, ſo totally waſh away his choler, that his temper was become perfectly placid and ſerene, when Mrs. Weſtern returned with Sophia into the room. The young lady had on her hat and capuchin, and the aunt acquainted Mr. Weſtern, that ſhe intended to take her niece with her to

her own lodgings; for indeed, brother, ſays ſhe, theſe rooms are not fit to receive a chriſtian ſoul in.

Very well, Madam, quoth Weſtern, whatever you pleaſe. The girl can never be in better hands than yours; and the parſon here can do me the juſtice to ſay, that I have ſaid fifty times behind your back, that you was one of the moſt ſenſible women in the world.

To this, cries the parſon, I am ready to bear teſtimony.

Nay, brother, ſays Mrs. Weſtern, I have always, I'm ſure, given you as favourable a character. You muſt own you have a little too much haſtineſs in your temper; but when you will allow yourſelf time to reflect, I never knew a man more reaſonable.

Why then, ſiſter, if you think ſo, ſaid the 'ſquire, here's your good health with all my heart. I am a little paſſionate ſometimes, but I ſcorn to bear any malice. Sophy, do you be a good girl, and do every thing your aunt orders you.

I have not the leaſt doubt of her, anſwered Mrs. Weſtern. She hath had already an example before her eyes, in the behaviour of that wretch her couſin Harriet, who ruined herſelf by neglecting my advice. —O brother, what think you? You was hardly gone out of hearing, when you ſet out for London, when who ſhould arrive but that impudent fellow with the odious Iriſh name — that Fitzpatrick. He broke in abruptly upon me without notice, or I would

not have ſeen him. He ran on a long, unintelligible ſtory about his wife, to which he forced me to give him a hearing; but I made him very little anſwer, and delivered him the letter from his wife, which I bid him anſwer himſelf. I ſuppoſe the wretch will endeavour to find us out; but I beg you will not ſee her, for I am determined I will not.

I zee her? anſwered the 'ſquire; you need not fear me. I'll gee no encouragement to ſuch undutiful wenches. It is well for the fellow her huſband, I was not at huome. Od rabbit it, he ſhould have taken a dance thru the horſe-pond, I promiſe un. You zee, Sophy, what undutifulneſs brings volks to. You ha an example in your own family.

Brother, cries the aunt, you need not ſhock my niece by ſuch odious repetitions. Why will you not leave every thing entirely to me? Well, well; I wull, I wull, ſaid the 'ſquire.

And now Mrs. Weſtern, luckily for Sophia, put an end to the converſation, by ordering chairs to be called. I ſay luckily; for had it continued much longer, freſh matter of diſſenſion would, probably, have ariſen between the brother and ſiſter; between whom education and ſex made the only difference; for both were equally violent, and equally poſitive; they had both a vaſt affection for Sophia, and both a ſovereign contempt for each other.

CHAP. V.

In which Jones receives a letter from Sophia, and goes to a play with Mrs. Miller and Partridge.

THE arrival of Black George in town, and the good offices which that grateful fellow had promiſed to do for his old benefactor, greatly comforted Jones in the midſt of all the anxiety and uneaſineſs which he had ſuffered on the account of Sophia; from whom, by the means of the ſaid George, he received the following anſwer to his letter, which Sophia, to whom the uſe of pen, ink, and paper was reſtored with her liberty, wrote the very evening when ſhe departed from her confinement.

SIR,

As I do not doubt your ſincerity in what you write, you will be pleaſed to hear that ſome of my afflictions are at an end, by the arrival of my aunt Weſtern, with whom I am at preſent, and with whom I enjoy all the liberty I can deſire. One promiſe my aunt hath inſiſted on my making, which is, that I will not ſee or converſe with any perſon without her knowledge and conſent. This promiſe I have moſt ſolemnly given, and ſhall moſt inviolably keep; and though ſhe hath not expreſsly forbidden me writing, yet that muſt be an omiſſion from

forgetfulneſs; or this, perhaps, is included in the word converſing. However, as I cannot but conſider this as a breach of her generous confidence in my honour, you cannot expect that I ſhall, after this, continue to write myſelf, or to receive letters, without her knowledge. A promiſe is with me a very ſacred thing, and to be extended to every thing underſtood from it, as well as to what is expreſsed by it; and this conſideration may perhaps, on reflection, afford you ſome comfort. But why ſhould I mention a comfort to you of this kind? For though there is one thing in which I can never comply with the beſt of fathers, yet am I firmly reſolved never to act in defiance of him, or to take any ſtep of conſequence without his conſent. A firm perſuaſion of this, muſt teach you to divert your thoughts from what fortune hath, perhaps, made impoſſible. This your own intereſt perſuades you. This may reconcile, I hope, Mr. Allworthy to you; and if it will, you have my injunctions to purſue it. Accidents have laid ſome obligations on me, and your good intentions probably more. Fortune may, perhaps, be ſometimes kinder to us both than at preſent. Believe this, that I ſhall always think of you as I think you deſerve, and am,

SIR,

Your obliged humble ſervant,

SOPHIA WESTERN.

I charge you write to me no more — at preſent at leaſt; and accept this, which is now of no ſervice to me, which I know you muſt want, and think you owe the trifle only to that fortune by which you found it *.

A child who had juſt learnt his letters, would have ſpelt this letter out in leſs time than Jones took in reading it. The ſenſations it occaſioned were a mixture of joy and grief; ſomewhat like what divide the mind of a good man, when he peruſes the will of his deceaſed friend, in which a large legacy, which his diſtreſſes make the more welcome, is bequeathed to him. Upon the whole, however, he was more pleaſed than diſpleaſed; and indeed the reader may probably wonder that he was diſpleaſed at all; but the reader is not quite ſo much in love as was poor Jones: and love is a diſeaſe, which, though it may in ſome inſtances reſemble a conſumption, (which it ſometimes cauſes) in others proceeds in direct oppoſition to it, and particularly in this, that it never flatters itſelf, or ſees any one ſymptom in a favourable light.

One thing gave him complete ſatisfaction, which was, that his miſtreſs had regained her liberty, and was now with a lady where ſhe might at leaſt aſſure herſelf of a decent treatment. Another comfortable circumſtance, was the reference which ſhe made to

* Meaning, perhaps, the bank-bill for 100 l.

her

her promiſe of never marrying any other man: for however diſintereſted he might imagine his paſſion, and notwithſtanding all the generous overtures made in his letter, I very much queſtion whether he could have heard a more afflicting piece of news, than that Sophia was married to another, though the match had been never ſo great, and never ſo likely to end in making her compleatly happy. That refined degree of Platonic affection which is abſolutely detached from the fleſh, and is indeed entirely and purely ſpiritual, is a gift confined to the female part of the creation; many of whom I have heard declare, (and doubtleſs with great truth) that they would, with the utmoſt readineſs, reſign a lover to a rival, when ſuch reſignation was proved to be neceſſary for the temporal intereſt of ſuch lover. Hence, therefore, I conclude, that this affection is in nature, though I cannot pretend to ſay, I have ever ſeen an inſtance of it.

Mr. Jones having ſpent three hours in reading and kiſſing the aforeſaid letter, and being, at laſt, in a ſtate of good ſpirits, from the laſt mentioned conſiderations, he agreed to carry an appointment, which he had before made, into execution. This was to attend Mrs. Miller, and her younger daughter, into the gallery at the play-houſe, and to admit Mr. Partridge as one of the company. For as Jones had really that taſte for humour which many affect, he expected to enjoy much entertainment in the criticiſms

of Partridge; from whom he expected the ſimple dictates of nature, unimproved indeed, but likewiſe unadulterated, by art.

In the firſt row then of the firſt gallery did Mr. Jones, Mrs. Miller, her youngeſt daughter, and Partridge, take their places. Partridge immediately declared, it was the fineſt place he had ever been in. When the firſt muſic was played, he ſaid, it was a wonder how ſo many fiddlers could play at one time without putting one another out. While the fellow was lighting the upper candles, he cried out to Mrs. Miller: Look, look, Madam, the very picture of the man in the end of the common-prayer-book, before the gun-powder-treaſon ſervice. Nor could he help obſerving, with a ſigh, when all the candles were lighted, that here were candles enough burnt in one night, to keep an honeſt poor family for a twelvemonth.

As ſoon as the play, which was Hamlet Prince of Denmark, began, Partridge was all attention, nor did he break ſilence till the entrance of the ghoſt; upon which he aſked Jones, what man that was in the ſtrange dreſs? ſomething, ſaid he, like what I have ſeen in a picture. Sure it is not armour, is it? Jones anſwered: That is the ghoſt. To which Partridge replied with a ſmile: Perſuade me to that, Sir, if you can. Though I can't ſay I ever actually ſaw a ghoſt in my life, yet I am certain I ſhould know one, if I ſaw him, better than that comes to. No, no, Sir, ghoſts don't appear in ſuch dreſſes as

that, neither. In this miſtake, which cauſed much laughter in the neighbourhood of Partridge, he was ſuffered to continue, 'till the ſcene between the ghoſt and Hamlet, when Partridge gave that credit to Mr. Garrick, which he had denied to Jones, and fell into ſo violent a trembling, that his knees knocked againſt each other. Jones aſked him, what was the matter, and whether he was afraid of the warrior upon the ſtage? O la! Sir, ſaid he, I perceive now it is what you told me. I am not afraid of any thing; for I know it is but a play. And if it was really a ghoſt, it could do one no harm at ſuch a diſtance, and in ſo much company; and yet if I was frightened, I am not the only perſon. Why, who, cries Jones, doſt thou take to be ſuch a coward here beſides thyſelf? Nay, you may call me coward if you will; but if that little man there upon the ſtage is not frightened, I never ſaw any man frightened in my life. Ay, ay; *go along with you!* Ay, to be ſure. Who's fool then? Will you? Lud have mercy upon ſuch fool-hardineſs!—Whatever happens it is good enough for you. —*Follow you?* I'd follow the devil as ſoon. Nay, perhaps, it is the devil—for they ſay he can put on what likeneſs he pleaſes. —Oh! here he is again. —*No farther!* No, you have gone far enough already; farther than I'd have gone for all the king's dominions. Jones offered to ſpeak, but Partridge cried: Huſh, huſh, dear Sir, don't you hear him! And during the whole ſpeech

of the ghoſt, he ſat with his eyes fixed partly on the ghoſt, and partly on Hamlet, and with his mouth open; the ſame paſſions which ſucceeded each other in Hamlet, ſucceeding likewiſe in him.

When the ſcene was over, Jones ſaid: Why, Partridge, you exceed my expectations. You enjoy the play more than I conceived poſſible. Nay, Sir, anſwered Partridge, if you are not afraid of the devil, I can't help it; but to be ſure it is natural to be ſurpriſed at ſuch things, though I know there is nothing in them: not that it was the ghoſt that ſurpriſed me neither; for I ſhould have known that to have been only a man in a ſtrange dreſs: but when I ſaw the little man ſo frightened himſelf, it was that which took hold of me. And doſt thou imagine then, Partridge, cries Jones, that he was really frightened? Nay, Sir, ſaid Partridge, did not you yourſelf obſerve afterwards, when he found it was his own father's ſpirit, and how he was murdered in the garden, how his fear forſook him by degrees, and he was ſtruck dumb with ſorrow, as it were, juſt as I ſhould have been, had it been my own caſe?—But huſh! O la! what noiſe is that? There he is again.—Well, to be certain, though I know there is nothing at all in it, I am glad I am not down yonder, where thoſe men are. Then turning his eyes again upon Hamlet: Ay, you may draw your ſword; what ſignifies a ſword againſt the power of the devil?

During the ſecond act, Partridge made very few remarks. He greatly admired the fineneſs of the dreſſes; nor could he help obſerving upon the king's countenance. Well, ſaid he, how people may be deceived by faces! *Nulla fides fronti* is, I find, a true ſaying. Who would think, by looking in the king's face, that he had ever committed a murder? He then enquired after the ghoſt; but Jones, who intended he ſhould be ſurpriſed, gave him no other ſatisfaction, than, that he might poſſibly ſee him again ſoon, and in a flaſh of fire.

Partridge ſat in fearful expectation of this; and now, when the ghoſt made his next appearance, Partridge cried out: There, Sir, now; what ſay you now? Is he frightened now or no? As much frightened as you think me, and, to be ſure, no body can help ſome fears, I would not be in ſo bad a condition, as what's his name, 'ſquire Hamlet, is there, for all the world. Bleſs me! what's become of the ſpirit? As I am a living ſoul, I thought I ſaw him ſink into the earth. Indeed, you ſaw right, anſwered Jones. Well, well, cries Partridge, I know it is only a play; and beſides, if there was any thing in all this, Madam Miller would not laugh ſo: for as to you, Sir, you would not be afraid, I believe, if the devil was here in perſon. — There, there — Ay, no wonder you are in ſuch a paſſion; ſhake the vile wicked wretch to pieces. If ſhe was my own mother, I ſhould ſerve her ſo. To be ſure,

all duty to a mother is forfeited by ſuch wicked doings. — Ay, go about your buſineſs; I hate the ſight of you.

Our critic was now pretty ſilent till the play, which Hamlet introduces before the king. This he did not at firſt underſtand, 'till Jones explained it to him; but he no ſooner entered into the ſpirit of it, than he began to bleſs himſelf that he had never committed murder. Then turning to Mrs. Miller, he aſked her, if ſhe did not imagine the king looked as if he was touched; though he is, ſaid he, a good actor, and doth all he can to hide it. Well, I would not have ſo much to anſwer for, as that wicked man there hath, to ſit upon a much higher chair than he ſits upon. — No wonder he run away; for your ſake I'll never truſt an innocent face again.

The grave-digging ſcene next engaged the attention of Partridge, who expreſſed much ſurprize at the number of ſculls thrown upon the ſtage. To which Jones anſwered, that it was one of the moſt famous burial-places about town. No wonder then, cries Partridge, that the place is haunted. But I never ſaw in my life a worſe grave-digger. I had a ſexton when I was clerk, that ſhould have dug three graves while he is digging one. The fellow handles a ſpade as if it was the firſt time he had ever had one in his hands. Ay, ay, you may ſing. You had rather ſing than work, I believe. — Upon Hamlet's taking up the ſcull, he cried out: Well, it is ſtrange to ſee

how fearleſs ſome men are: I never could bring myſelf to touch any thing belonging to a dead man on any account. — He ſeemed frightened enough too at the ghoſt, I thought. *Nemo omnibus horis ſapit.*

Little more worth remembering occurred during the play; at the end of which Jones aſked him, which of the players he had liked beſt? To this he anſwered, with ſome appearance of indignation at the queſtion: The king, without doubt. Indeed, Mr. Partridge, ſays Mrs. Miller, you are not of the ſame opinion with the town: for they are all agreed, that Hamlet is acted by the beſt player who was ever on the ſtage. He, the beſt player! cries Partridge, with a contemptuous ſneer. Why I could act as well as he myſelf. I am ſure, if I had ſeen a ghoſt, I ſhould have looked in the very ſame manner, and done juſt as he did. And then, to be ſure, in that ſcene, as you called it, between him and his mother, where you told me he acted ſo fine, why, lord help me, any man, that is, any good man, that had ſuch a mother, would have done exactly the ſame. I know you are only joking with me; but indeed, Madam, though I was never at a play in London, yet I have ſeen acting before in the country; and the king for my money; he ſpeaks all his words diſtinctly, half as loud again as the other. — Any body may ſee he is an actor.

While Mrs. Miller was thus engaged in converſation with Partridge, a lady came up to Mr. Jones, whom

he immediately knew to be Mrs. Fitzpatrick. She ſaid, ſhe had ſeen him from the other part of the gallery, and had taken that opportunity of ſpeaking to him, as ſhe had ſomething to ſay, which might be of great ſervice to himſelf. She then acquainted him with her lodgings, and made him an appointment the next day in the morning; which, upon recollection, ſhe preſently changed to the afternoon; at which time Jones promiſed to attend her.

Thus ended the adventure of the play-houſe; where Partridge had afforded great mirth, not only to Jones and Mrs. Miller, but to all who ſat within hearing, who were more attentive to what he ſaid, than to any thing that paſſed on the ſtage.

He durſt not go to bed all that night, for fear of the ghoſt; and for many nights after, ſweated for two or three hours before he went to ſleep, with the ſame apprehenſions, and waked ſeveral times in great horrors, crying out: Lord have mercy upon us! there it is.

CHAP. VI.

In which the hiſtory is obliged to go back.

IT is almoſt impoſſible for the beſt parent to obſerve an exact impartiality to his children, even though no ſuperior merit ſhould biaſs his affection; but ſure a parent can hardly be blamed, when that ſuperiority determines his preference.

As I regard all the perſonages of this hiſtory in the light of my children; ſo I muſt confeſs the ſame inclination of partiality to Sophia; and for that I hope the reader will allow me the ſame excuſe, from the ſuperiority of her character.

This extraordinary tenderneſs which I have for my heroine, never ſuffers me to quit her any long time without the utmoſt reluctance. I could now, therefore, return impatiently to enquire, what hath happened to this lovely creature ſince her departure from her father's, but that I am obliged firſt to pay a ſhort viſit to Mr. Blifil.

Mr. Weſtern, in the firſt confuſion into which his mind was caſt, upon the ſudden news he received of his daughter, and in his firſt hurry to go after her, had not once thought of ſending any account of the diſcovery to Blifil. He had not gone far, however, before he recollected himſelf, and accordingly ſtopt at the very firſt inn he came to, and diſpatched away

a meſſenger to acquaint Blifil with his having found Sophia, and with his firm reſolution to marry her to him immediately, if he would come up after him to town.

As the love which Blifil had for Sophia was of that violent kind, which nothing but the loſs of her fortune, or ſome ſuch accident, could leſſen, his inclination to the match was not at all altered by her having run away, though he was obliged to lay this to his own account. He very readily, therefore, embraced this offer. Indeed, he now propoſed the gratification of a very ſtrong paſſion beſides avarice, by marrying this young lady, and this was hatred: for he concluded that matrimony afforded an equal opportunity of ſatisfying either hatred or love; and this opinion is very probably verified by much experience. To ſay the truth, if we are to judge by the ordinary behaviour of married perſons to each other, we ſhall perhaps be apt to conclude, that the generality ſeek the indulgence of the former paſſion only, in their union of every thing but of hearts.

There was one difficulty, however, in his way, and this aroſe from Mr. Allworthy. That good man, when he found by the departure of Sophia, (for neither that, nor the cauſe of it, could be concealed from him) the great averſion which ſhe had for his nephew, began to be ſeriouſly concerned that he had been deceived into carrying matters ſo far. He by no means concurred with the opinions of thoſe

parents, who think it as immaterial to conſult the inclinations of their children in the affair of marriage, as to ſolicit the good pleaſure of their ſervants when they intend to take a journey; and who are, by law or decency at leaſt, with-held often from uſing abſolute force. On the contrary, as he eſteemed the inſtitution to be of the moſt ſacred kind, he thought every preparatory caution neceſſary to preſerve it holy and inviolate; and very wiſely concluded, that the ſureſt way to effect this, was by laying the foundation in previous affection.

Blifil indeed ſoon cured his uncle of all anger on the ſcore of deceit, by many vows and proteſtations that he had been deceived himſelf, with which the many declarations of Weſtern very well tallied; but now to perſuade Allworthy to conſent to the renewing his addreſſes, was a matter of ſuch apparent difficulty, that the very appearance was ſufficient to have deterred a leſs enterprizing genius; but this young gentleman ſo well knew his own talents, that nothing within the province of cunning ſeemed to him hard to be atchieved.

Here then he repreſented the violence of his own affection, and the hopes of ſubduing averſion in the lady by perſeverance. He begged that in an affair on which depended all his future repoſe, he might at leaſt be at liberty to try all fair means for ſucceſs. Heaven forbid, he ſaid, that he ſhould ever think of prevailing by any other than the moſt gentle methods!

Beſides, Sir, ſaid he, if they fail, you may then (which will be ſurely time enough) deny your conſent. He urged the great and eager deſire which Mr. Weſtern had for the match; and laſtly, he made great uſe of the name of Jones, to whom he imputed all that had happened; and from whom, he ſaid, to preſerve ſo valuable a young lady was even an act of charity.

All theſe arguments were well ſeconded by Mr. Thwackum, who dwelt a little ſtronger on the authority of parents than Mr. Blifil himſelf had done. He aſcribed the meaſures which Mr. Blifil was deſirous to take, to chriſtian motives: And though, ſays he, the good young gentleman hath mentioned charity laſt, I am almoſt convinced, it is his firſt and principal conſideration.

Square, poſſibly, had he been preſent, would have ſung to the ſame tune, though in a different key, and would have diſcovered much moral fitneſs in the proceeding; but he was now gone to Bath for the recovery of his health.

Allworthy, though not without reluctance, at laſt yielded to the deſires of his nephew. He ſaid, he would accompany him to London, where he might be at liberty to uſe every honeſt endeavour to gain the lady: But I declare, ſaid he, I will never give my conſent to any abſolute force being put on her inclinations, nor ſhall you ever have her, unleſs ſhe can be brought freely to compliance.

Thus did the affection of Allworthy for his nephew

betray the ſuperior underſtanding to be triumphed over by the inferior; and thus is the prudence of the beſt of heads often defeated, by the tenderneſs of the beſt of hearts.

Blifil having obtained this unhoped-for acquieſcence in his uncle, reſted not till he carried his purpoſe into execution. And as no immediate buſineſs required Mr. Allworthy's preſence in the country, and little preparation is neceſſary to men for a journey, they ſet out the very next day, and arrived in town that evening, when Mr. Jones, as we have ſeen, was diverting himſelf with Partridge, at the play.

The morning after his arrival, Mr. Blifil waited on Mr. Weſtern, by whom he was moſt kindly and graciouſly received, and from whom he had every poſſible aſſurance (perhaps more than was poſſible) that he ſhould very ſhortly be as happy as Sophia could make him; nor would the 'ſquire ſuffer the young gentleman to return to his uncle, till he had, almoſt againſt his will, carried him to his ſiſter.

CHAP. VII.

In which Mr. Weſtern pays a viſit to his ſiſter, in company with Mr. Blifil.

MRS. Weſtern was reading a lecture on prudence, and matrimonial politics, to her niece, when her brother and Blifil broke in with leſs ceremony than the laws of viſiting require. Sophia no ſooner ſaw Blifil, than ſhe turned pale, and almoſt loſt the uſe of all her faculties; but her aunt, on the contrary, waxed red, and having all her faculties at command, began to exert her tongue on the 'ſquire.

Brother, ſaid ſhe, I am aſtoniſhed at your behaviour. Will you never learn any regard to decorum? Will you ſtill look upon every apartment as your own, or as belonging to one of your country tenants? Do you think yourſelf at liberty to invade the privacies of women of condition, without the leaſt decency or notice? — Why, what a pox! is the matter now? quoth the 'ſquire. One would think I had caught you at — None of your brutality, Sir, I beſeech you, anſwered ſhe. — You have ſurpriſed my poor niece ſo, that ſhe can hardly, I ſee, ſupport herſelf. — Go, my dear, retire, and endeavour to recruit your ſpirits; for I ſee you have occaſion. At which words, Sophia, who never received a more welcome command, haſtily withdrew.

To be ſure, ſiſter, cries the 'ſquire, you are mad, when I ha brought Mr. Blifil here to court her, to force her away.

Sure, brother, ſays ſhe, you are worſe than mad, when you know in what ſituation affairs are, to —— I am ſure, I aſk Mr. Blifil pardon, but he knows very well to whom to impute ſo diſagreeable a reception. For my own part, I am ſure, I ſhall always be very glad to ſee Mr. Blifil; but his own good ſenſe would not have ſuffered him to proceed ſo abruptly, had you not compelled him to it.

Blifil bowed and ſtammered, and looked like a fool; but Weſtern, without giving him time to form a ſpeech for the purpoſe, anſwered: Well, well, I am to blame if you will, I always am, certainly; but come, let the girl be vetched back again, or let Mr. Blifil go to her —— He's come up on purpoſe, and there is no time to be loſt.

Brother, cries Mrs. Weſtern, Mr. Blifil, I am confident, underſtands himſelf better than to think of ſeeing my niece any more this morning after what hath happened. Women are of a nice contexture; and our ſpirits, when diſordered, are not to be recompoſed in a moment. Had you ſuffered Mr. Blifil to have ſent his compliments to my niece, and to have deſired the favour of waiting on her in the afternoon, I ſhould poſſibly have prevailed on her to have ſeen him; but now I deſpair of bringing about any ſuch matter.

I am very ſorry, Madam, cried Blifil, that Mr. Weſtern's extraordinary kindneſs to me, which I can never enough acknowledge, ſhould have occaſioned — Indeed, Sir, ſaid ſhe, interrupting him, you need make no apologies, we all know my brother ſo well.

I don't care what any body knows of me, anſwered the 'ſquire; — but when muſt he come to zee her? For conſider, I tell you, he is come up on purpoſe, and ſo is Allworthy. Brother, ſaid ſhe, whatever meſſage Mr. Blifil thinks proper to ſend to my niece, ſhall be delivered to her; and I ſuppoſe, ſhe will want no inſtructions to make a proper anſwer. I am convinced ſhe will not refuſe to ſee Mr. Blifil at a proper time. — The devil ſhe won't, anſwered the 'ſquire. — Odſbub! — Don't we know — I ſay nothing, but ſome volk are wiſer than all the world. — If I might ha had my will, ſhe had not run away before: and now I expect to hear every moment ſhe is guone again. For as great a fool as ſome volk think me, I know very well ſhe hates — No matter, brother, replied Mrs. Weſtern, I will not hear my niece abuſed. It is a reflection on my family. She his an honour to it; and ſhe will be an honour to it, I promiſe you. I will pawn my whole reputation in the world on her conduct. — I ſhall be glad to ſee you, brother, in the afternoon; for I have ſomewhat of importance to mention to you. — At preſent, Mr. Blifil, as well as you, muſt excuſe me; for I am in haſte to dreſs. — Well, but, ſaid the 'ſquire,

'ſquire, do appoint a time. — Indeed, ſaid ſhe, I can appoint no time. — I tell you, I will ſee you in the afternoon. — What the devil would you ha me do? cries the 'ſquire, turning to Blifil. I can no more turn her, than a beagle can turn an old hare. Perhaps, ſhe will be in a better humour in the afternoon. — I am condemned, I ſee, Sir, to misfortune, anſwered Blifil; but I ſhall always own my obligations to you. — He then took a ceremonious leave of Mrs. Weſtern, who was altogether as ceremonious on her part; and then they departed, the 'ſquire muttering to himſelf with an oath, that Blifil ſhould ſee his daugther in the afternoon.

If Weſtern was little pleaſed with this interview, Blifil was leſs. As to the former, he imputed the whole behaviour of his ſiſter to her humour only, and to her diſſatisfaction at the omiſſion of ceremony in the viſit; but Blifil ſaw a little deeper into things. He ſuſpected ſomewhat of more conſequence, from two or three words which dropt from the lady; and, to ſay the truth, he ſuſpected right, as will appear when I have unfolded the ſeveral matters which will be contained in the following chapter.

CHAP. VIII.

Schemes of lady Bellaſton for the ruin of Jones.

LOVE had taken too deep a root in the mind of lord Fellamar, to be plucked up by the rude hands of Mr. Weſtern. In the heat of reſentment he had indeed given a commiſſion to captain Egglane, which the captain had far exceeded in the execution; nor had it been executed at all, had his lordſhip been able to find the captain after he had ſeen lady Bellaſton, which was in the afternoon of the day after he had received the affront; but ſo induſtrious was the captain in the diſcharge of his duty, that having after long enquiry found out the 'ſquire's lodgings very late in the evening, he ſat up all night at a tavern, that he might not miſs the 'ſquire in the morning, and by that means miſſed the revocation which my lord had ſent to his lodgings.

In the afternoon then next after the intended rape of Sophia, his lordſhip, as we have ſaid, made a viſit to lady Bellaſton, who laid open ſo much of the character of the 'ſquire, that his lordſhip plainly ſaw the abſurdity he had been guilty of in taking any offence at his words, eſpecially as he had thoſe honourable deſigns on his daughter. He then unboſomed the violence of his paſſion to lady Bellaſton, who readily undertook the cauſe, and

encouraged him with certain aſſurance of a moſt favourable reception from all the elders of the family, and from the father himſelf when he ſhould be ſober, and ſhould be made acquainted with the nature of the offer made to his daughter. The only danger, ſhe ſaid, lay in the fellow ſhe had formerly mentioned, who, though a beggar and a vagabond, had by ſome means or other, ſhe knew not what, procured himſelf tolerable cloaths, and paſt for a gentleman. Now, ſays ſhe, as I have, for the ſake of my couſin, made it my buſineſs to enquire after this fellow, I have luckily found out his lodgings; with which ſhe then acquainted his lordſhip. I am thinking, my lord, added ſhe, (for this fellow is too mean for your perſonal reſentment) whether it would not be poſſible for your lordſhip to contrive ſome method of having him preſſed and ſent on board a ſhip. Neither law nor conſcience forbid this project: for the fellow, I promiſe you, however well dreſt, is but a vagabond, and as proper as any fellow in the ſtreets to be preſſed into the ſervice; and as for the conſcientious part, ſurely the preſervation of a young lady from ſuch ruin is a moſt meritorious act; nay, with regard to the fellow himſelf, unleſs he could ſucceed (which heaven forbid) with my couſin, it may probably be the means of preſerving him from the gallows, and perhaps may make his fortune in an honeſt way.

Lord Fellamar very heartily thanked her ladyſhip, for the part which ſhe was pleaſed to take in the affair,

upon the ſucceſs of which his whole future happineſs entirely depended. He ſaid, he ſaw at preſent no objection to the preſſing ſcheme, and would conſider of putting it in execution. He then moſt earneſtly recommended to her ladyſhip, to do him the honour of immediately mentioning his propoſals to the family; to whom, he ſaid, he offered a *carte blanche*, and would ſettle his fortune in almoſt any manner they ſhould require. And after uttering many ecſtacies and raptures concerning Sophia, he took his leave and departed, but not before he had received the ſtrongeſt charge to beware of Jones, and to loſe no time in ſecuring his perſon where he ſhould no longer be in a capacity of making any attempts to the ruin of the young lady.

The moment Mrs. Weſtern was arrived at her lodgings, a card was diſpatched with her compliments to lady Bellaſton; who no ſooner received, it than with the impatience of a lover, ſhe flew to her couſin, rejoiced at this fair opportunity, which beyond her hopes offered itſelf: for ſhe was much better pleaſed with the proſpect of making the propoſals to a woman of ſenſe, and who knew the world, than to a gentleman whom ſhe honoured with the appellation of Hottentot; though indeed from him ſhe apprehended no danger of a refuſal.

The two ladies being met, after very ſhort previous ceremonials, fell to buſineſs, which was indeed almoſt as ſoon concluded as begun; for Mrs. Weſtern no

ſooner heard the name of lord Fellamar than her cheeks glowed with pleaſure; but when ſhe was acquainted with the eagerneſs of his paſſion, the earneſtneſs of his propoſals, and the generoſity of his offer, ſhe declared her full ſatisfaction in the moſt explicit terms.

In the progreſs of their converſation, the diſcourſe turned to Jones, and both couſins very pathetically lamented the unfortunate attachment which both agreed Sophia had to that young fellow; and Mrs. Weſtern entirely attributed it to the folly of her brother's management. She concluded however at laſt, with declaring her confidence in the good underſtanding of her niece, who, though ſhe would not give up her affection in favour of Blifil, will, I doubt not, ſays ſhe, ſoon be prevailed upon to ſacrifice a ſimple inclination to the addreſſes of a fine gentleman, who brings her both a title and a large eſtate: For indeed, added ſhe, I muſt do Sophy the juſtice to confeſs, this Blifil is but a hideous kind of fellow, as you know, Bellaſton, all country-gentlemen are, and hath nothing but his fortune to recommend him.

Nay, ſaid lady Bellaſton, I don't then ſo much wonder at my couſin; for I promiſe you, this Jones is a very agreeable fellow, and hath one virtue which the men ſay is a great recommendation to us. What do you think, Mrs. Weſtern — I ſhall certainly make you laugh; nay, I can hardly tell you myſelf for laughing — Will you believe that the fellow hath had

the aſſurance to make love to me? But if you ſhould be inclined to diſbelieve it, here is evidence enough, his own hand-writing, I aſſure you. She then delivered her couſin the letter with the propoſals of marriage, which if the reader hath a deſire to ſee, he will find already on record in the XVth book of this hiſtory.

Upon my word, I am aſtoniſhed, ſaid Mrs. Weſtern; this is indeed a maſter-piece of aſſurance. With your leave, I may poſſibly make ſome uſe of this letter. You have my full liberty, cries lady Bellaſton, to apply it to what purpoſe you pleaſe. However, I would not have it ſhewn to any but Miſs Weſtern, nor to her unleſs you find occaſion. Well, and how did you uſe the fellow? returned Mrs. Weſtern. Not as a huſband, ſaid the lady; I am not married, I promiſe you, my dear. You know, Mrs. Weſtern, I have tried the comforts once already; and once I think is enough for any reaſonable woman.

This letter lady Bellaſton thought would certainly turn the balance againſt Jones in the mind of Sophia, and ſhe was emboldened to give it up, partly by her hopes of having him inſtantly diſpatched out of the way, and partly by having ſecured the evidence of Honour, who, upon ſounding her, ſhe ſaw ſufficient reaſon to imagine, was prepared to teſtify whatever ſhe pleaſed.

But perhaps the reader may wonder why lady Bellaſton, who in her heart hated Sophia, ſhould be

ſo deſirous of promoting a match, which was ſo much to the intereſt of the young lady. Now, I would deſire ſuch readers to look carefully into human nature, page almoſt the laſt, and there he will find, in ſcarce legible characters, that women, notwithſtanding the prepoſterous behaviour of mothers, aunts, &c. in matrimonial matters, do in reality think it ſo great a misfortune to have their inclinations in love thwarted, that they imagine, they ought never to carry enmity higher than upon theſe diſappointments; again, he will find it written much about the ſame place, that a woman who hath once been pleaſed with the poſſeſſion of a man, will go above half way to the devil, to prevent any other woman from enjoying the ſame.

If he will not be contented with theſe reaſons, I freely confeſs I ſee no other motive to the actions of that lady, unleſs we will conceive ſhe was bribed by lord Fellamar, which for my own part I ſee no cauſe to ſuſpect.

Now this was the affair which Mrs. Weſtern was preparing to introduce to Sophia, by ſome prefatory diſcourſe on the folly of love, and on the wiſdom of legal proſtitution for hire, when her brother and Blifil broke abruptly in upon her; and hence aroſe all that coldneſs in her behaviour to Blifil, which, though the 'ſquire, as was uſual with him, imputed to a wrong cauſe, infuſed into Blifil himſelf (he being a much more cunning man) a ſuſpicion of the real truth.

CHAP. IX.

In which Jones pays a viſit to Mrs. Fitzpatrick.

THE reader may now perhaps be pleaſed to return with us to Mr. Jones, who, at the appointed hour, attended on Mrs. Fitzpatrick; but before we relate the converſation which now paſt, it may be proper, according to our method, to return a little back, and to account for ſo great an alteration of behaviour in this lady, that from changing her lodgings principally to avoid Mr. Jones, ſhe had now induſtriouſly, as hath been ſeen, ſought this interview.

And here we ſhall need only to reſort to what happened the preceding day, when hearing from lady Bellaſton, that Mr. Weſtern was arrived in town, ſhe went to pay her duty to him, at his lodgings, at Piccadilly, where ſhe was received with many ſcurvy compellations too coarſe to be repeated, and was even threatened to be kicked out of doors. From hence an old ſervant of her aunt Weſtern, with whom ſhe was well acquainted, conducted her to the lodgings of that lady, who treated her not more kindly, but more politely; or, to ſay the truth, with rudeneſs in another way. In ſhort, ſhe returned from both, plainly convinced not only that her ſcheme of reconciliation had proved abortive, but

that ſhe muſt for ever give over all thoughts of bringing it about by any means whatever. From this moment deſire of revenge only filled her mind; and in this temper meeting Jones at the play, an opportunity ſeemed to her to occur of effecting this purpoſe.

The reader muſt remember, that he was acquainted by Mrs. Fitzpatrick, in the account ſhe gave of her own ſtory, with the fondneſs Mrs. Weſtern had formerly ſhewn for Mr. Fitzpatrick at Bath, from the diſappointment of which, Mrs. Fitzpatrick derived the great bitterneſs her aunt had expreſſed towards her. She had therefore no doubt but that the good lady would as eaſily liſten to the addreſſes of Mr. Jones, as ſhe had before done to the other; for the ſuperiority of charms was clearly on the ſide of Mr. Jones; and the advance which her aunt had ſince made in age, ſhe concluded, (how juſtly I will not ſay) was an argument rather in favour of her project than againſt it.

Therefore, when Jones attended, after a previous declaration of her deſire of ſerving him, ariſing, as ſhe ſaid, from a firm aſſurance how much ſhe ſhould by ſo doing oblige Sophia; and after ſome excuſes for her former diſappointment, and after acquainting Mr. Jones in whoſe cuſtody his miſtreſs was, of which ſhe thought him ignorant; ſhe very explicitly mentioned her ſcheme to him, and adviſed him to make ſham addreſſes to the older lady, in order

to procure an eaſy acceſs to the younger, informing him at the ſame time of the ſucceſs which Mr. Fitzpatrick had formerly owed to the very ſame ſtratagem.

Mr. Jones expreſſed great gratitude to the lady for the kind intentions towards him which ſhe had expreſſed, and indeed teſtified, by this propoſal; but beſides intimating ſome diffidence of ſucceſs from the lady's knowledge of his love to her niece, which had not been her caſe in regard to Mr. Fitzpatrick, he ſaid, he was afraid Miſs Weſtern would never agree to an impoſition of this kind, as well from her utter deteſtation of all fallacy, as from her avowed duty to her aunt.

Mrs. Fitzpatrick was a little nettled at this; and indeed, if it may not be called a lapſe of the tongue, it was a ſmall deviation from politeneſs in Jones, and into which he ſcarce would have fallen, had not the delight he felt in praiſing Sophia, hurried him out of all reflection; for this commendation of one couſin was more than a tacit rebuke on the other.

Indeed, Sir, anſwered the lady, with ſome warmth, I cannot think there is any thing eaſier than to cheat an old woman with a profeſſion of love, when her complexion is amorous; and though ſhe is my aunt, I muſt ſay there never was a more liquoriſh one than her ladyſhip. Can't you pretend that the deſpair of poſſeſſing her niece, from her being promiſed to

Blifil, has made you turn your thoughts towards her? As to my couſin Sophia, I can't imagine her to be ſuch a ſimpleton as to have the leaſt ſcruple on ſuch an account, or to conceive any harm in puniſhing one of theſe haggs for the many miſchiefs they bring upon families, by their tragi-comic paſſions; for which I think it is pity they are not puniſhable by law. I had no ſuch ſcruple myſelf; and yet I hope my couſin Sophia will not think it an affront, when I ſay ſhe cannot deteſt every real ſpecies of falſhood more than her couſin Fitzpatrick. To my aunt indeed I pretend no duty, nor doth ſhe deſerve any. However, Sir, I have given you my advice, and if you decline purſuing it, I ſhall have the leſs opinion of your underſtanding — that's all.

Jones now clearly ſaw the error he had committed, and exerted his utmoſt power to rectify it; but he only faultered and ſtuttered into nonſenſe and contradiction. To ſay the truth, it is often ſafer to abide by the conſequences of the firſt blunder, than to endeavour to rectify it; for by ſuch endeavours we generally plunge deeper inſtead of extricating ourſelves; and few perſons will on ſuch occaſions have the good nature, which Mrs. Fitzpatrick diſplayed to Jones, by ſaying, with a ſmile: You need attempt no more excuſes; for I can eaſily forgive a real lover, whatever is the effect of fondneſs for his miſtreſs.

She then renewed her propoſal, and very fervently recommended it, omitting no argument which her

invention could ſuggeſt on the ſubject; for ſhe was ſo violently incenſed againſt her aunt, that ſcarce any thing was capable of affording her equal pleaſure with expoſing her; and like a true woman, ſhe would ſee no difficulties in the execution of a favourite ſcheme.

Jones however perſiſted in declining the undertaking, which had not indeed the leaſt probability of ſucceſs. He eaſily perceived the motives which induced Mrs. Fitzpatrick to be ſo eager in preſſing her advice. He ſaid, he would not deny the tender and paſſionate regard he had for Sophia; but was ſo conſcious of the inequality of their ſituations, that he could never flatter himſelf ſo far as to hope that ſo divine a young lady would condeſcend to think on ſo unworthy a man; nay, he proteſted, he could ſcarce bring himſelf to wiſh ſhe ſhould. He concluded with a profeſſion of generous ſentiments, which we have not at preſent leiſure to inſert.

There are ſome fine women (for I dare not here ſpeak in too general terms) with whom ſelf is ſo predominant, that they never detach it from any ſubject; and as vanity is with them a ruling principle, they are apt to lay hold of whatever praiſe they meet with; and, though the property of others, convey it to their own uſe. In the company of theſe ladies it is impoſſible to ſay any thing handſome of another woman, which they will not apply to themſelves; nay, they often improve the praiſe they ſeize; as for

inſtance: If her beauty, her wit, her gentility, her good-humour deſerve ſo much commendation, what do I deſerve who poſſeſs thoſe qualities in ſo much more eminent a degree?

To theſe ladies a man often recommends himſelf while he is commending another woman; and while he is expreſſing ardour and generous ſentiments for his miſtreſs, they are conſidering what a charming lover this man would make to them, who can feel all this tenderneſs for an inferior degree of merit. Of this, ſtrange as it may ſeem, I have ſeen many inſtances beſides Mrs. Fitzpatrick, to whom all this really happened, and who now began to feel a ſomewhat for Mr. Jones, the ſymptoms of which ſhe much ſooner underſtood than poor Sophia had formerly done.

To ſay the truth, perfect beauty in both ſexes is a more irreſiſtible object than it is generally thought; for notwithſtanding ſome of us are contented with more homely lots, and learn by rote (as children are to repeat what gives them no idea) to deſpiſe outſide, and to value more ſolid charms; yet I have always obſerved at the approach of conſummate beauty, that theſe more ſolid charms only ſhine with that kind of luſtre which the ſtars have after the riſing of the ſun.

When Jones had finiſhed his exclamations, many of which would have become the mouth of Oroondates himſelf, Mrs. Fitzpatrick heaved a deep ſigh, and

taking her eyes off from Jones, on whom they had been ſome time fixed, and dropping them on the ground, ſhe cried: Indeed, Mr. Jones, I pity you; but it is the curſe of ſuch tenderneſs to be thrown away on thoſe who are inſenſible of it. I know my couſin better than you, Mr. Jones, and I muſt ſay, any woman who makes no return to ſuch a paſſion, and ſuch a perſon, is unworthy of both.

Sure, Madam, ſaid Jones, you can't mean — Mean? cries Mrs. Fitzpatrick, I know not what I mean; there is ſomething, I think, in true tenderneſs bewitching; few women ever meet with it in men, and fewer ſtill know how to value it when they do. I never heard ſuch truly noble ſentiments, and I can't tell how it is, but you force one to believe you. Sure ſhe muſt be the moſt contemptible of women who can overlook ſuch merit.

The manner and look with which all this was ſpoke, infuſed a ſuſpicion into Jones, which we don't care to convey in direct words to the reader. Inſtead of making any anſwer, he ſaid: I am afraid, Madam, I have made too tireſome a viſit, and offered to take his leave.

Not at all, Sir, anſwered Mrs. Fitzpatrick. — Indeed I pity you, Mr. Jones; indeed I do; but if you are going, conſider of the ſcheme I have mentioned. I am convinced you will approve it, and let me ſee you again as ſoon as you can. — To-morrow morning if you will, or at leaſt ſome

time to-morrow. I ſhall be at home all day.

Jones then, after many expreſſions of thanks, very reſpectfully retired; nor could Mrs. Fitzpatrick forbear making him a preſent of a look at parting, by which if he had underſtood nothing, he muſt have had no underſtanding in the language of the eyes. In reality it confined his reſolution of returning to her no more; for faulty as he hath hitherto appeared in this hiſtory, his whole thoughts were now ſo confined to his Sophia, that I believe no woman upon earth could have now drawn him into an act of inconſtancy.

Fortune however, who was not his friend, reſolved, as he intended to give her no ſecond opportunity, to make the beſt of this; and accordingly produced the tragical incident which we are now in ſorrowful notes to record.

CHAP. X.

The conſequence of the preceding viſit.

MR. Fitzpatrick having received the letter before mentioned, from Mrs. Weſtern, and being by that means acquainted with the place to which his wife was retired, returned directly to Bath, and thence the day after ſet forward to London.

The reader hath been already often informed of

the jealous temper of this gentleman. He may likewiſe be pleaſed to remember the ſuſpicion which he had conceived of Jones at Upton, upon his finding him in the room with Mrs. Waters; and though ſufficient reaſons had afterwards appeared entirely to clear up that ſuſpicion, yet now the reading ſo handſome a character of Mr. Jones from his wife, cauſed him to reflect, that ſhe likewiſe was in the inn at the ſame time, and jumbled together ſuch a confuſion of circumſtances in a head which was naturally none of the cleareſt, that the whole produced that green-eyed monſter mentioned by Shakeſpear in his tragedy of Othello.

And now as he was enquiring in the ſtreet after his wife, and had juſt received directions to the door, unfortunately Mr. Jones was iſſuing from it.

Fitzpatrick did not yet recollect the face of Jones; however, ſeeing a young well-dreſſed fellow coming from his wife, he made directly up to him, and aſked him, what he had been doing in that houſe? For I am ſure, ſaid he, you muſt have been in it, as I ſaw you come out of it.

Jones anſwered very modeſtly, that he had been viſiting a lady there. To which Fitzpatrick replied: What buſineſs have you with the lady? Upon which Jones, who now perfectly remembered the voice, features, and indeed coat, of the gentleman, cried out: — Ha! my good friend, give me your hand; I hope there is no ill blood remaining between us,

us, upon a ſmall miſtake which happened ſo long ago.

Upon my ſoul, Sir, ſaid Fitzpatrick, I don't know your name, nor your face. Indeed, Sir, ſaid Jones, neither have I the pleaſure of knowing your name, but your face I very well remember to have ſeen before at Upton, where a fooliſh quarrel happened between us, which, if it is not made up yet, we will now make up over a bottle.

At Upton! cried the other. — Ha! upon my ſoul, I believe your name is Jones. Indeed, anſwered he, it is. — O, upon my ſoul, cries Fitzpatrick, you are the very man I wanted to meet. — Upon my ſoul I will drink a bottle with you preſently; but firſt I will give you a great knock over the pate. There is for you, you raſcal. Upon my ſoul, if you do not give me ſatisfaction for that blow, I will give you another. And then drawing his ſword, put himſelf in a poſture of defence, which was the only ſcience he underſtood.

Jones was a little ſtaggered by the blow, which came ſomewhat unexpectedly; but preſently recovering himſelf, he alſo drew, and though he underſtood nothing of fencing, preſt on ſo boldly upon Fitzpatrick, that he beat down his guard, and ſheathed one half of his ſword in the body of the ſaid gentleman, who had no ſooner received it, than he ſtept backwards, dropt the point of his ſword, and leaning upon it, cried: I have ſatisfaction enough: I am a dead man.

I hope not, cries Jones, but whatever be the conſequence, you muſt be ſenſible you have drawn it upon yourſelf. At this inſtant a number of fellows ruſhed in and ſeized Jones, who told them, he ſhould make no reſiſtance, and begged ſome of them at leaſt would take care of the wounded gentleman.

Ay, cries one of the fellows, the wounded gentleman will be taken care enough of; for I ſuppoſe he hath not many hours to live. As for you, Sir, you have a month at leaſt good yet. D—n me, Jack, ſaid another, he hath prevented his voyage; he's bound to another port now; and many other ſuch jeſts was our poor Jones made the ſubject of, by theſe fellows, who were indeed the gang employed by lord Fellamar, and had dogged him into the houſe of Mrs. Fitzpatrick, waiting for him at the corner of the ſtreet, when this unfortunate accident happened.

The officer who commanded this gang very wiſely concluded, that his buſineſs was now to deliver his priſoner into the hands of the civil magiſtrate. He ordered him, therefore, to be carried to a public houſe, where, having ſent for a conſtable, he delivered him to his cuſtody.

The conſtable ſeeing Mr. Jones very well dreſt, and hearing that the accident had happened in a duel, treated his priſoner with great civility, and, at his requeſt, diſpatched a meſſenger to enquire after the wounded gentleman, who was now at a tavern

under the ſurgeon's hands. The report brought back was, that the wound was certainly mortal, and there were no hopes of life. Upon which the conſtable informed Jones, that he muſt go before a juſtice. He anſwered: Wherever you pleaſe: I am indifferent as to what happens to me; for though I am convinced I am not guilty of murder in the eye of the law, yet the weight of blood I find intolerable upon my mind.

Jones was now conducted before the juſtice, where the ſurgeon who dreſſed Mr. Fitzpatrick appeared, and depoſed, that he believed the wound to be mortal; upon which the priſoner was committed to the Gate-houſe. It was very late at night, ſo that Jones would not ſent for Partridge till the next morning; and as he never ſhut his eyes till ſeven, ſo it was near twelve before the poor fellow, who was greatly frightened at not hearing from his maſter ſo long, received a meſſage which almoſt deprived him of his being, when he heard it.

He went to the Gate-houſe with trembling knees and a beating heart, and was no ſooner arrived in the preſence of Jones, than he lamented the misfortune that had befallen him, with many tears, looking all the while frequently about him in great terror; for as the news now arrived that Mr. Fitzpatrick was dead, the poor fellow apprehended every minute that his ghoſt would enter the room. At laſt he delivered him a letter, which he had like

to have forgot, and which came from Sophia by the hands of Black George.

Jones preſently diſpatched every one out of the room, and having eagerly broke open the letter, read as follows:

You owe the hearing from me again to an accident, which I own ſurprizes me. My aunt hath juſt now ſhewn me a letter from you to lady Bellaſton, which contains a propoſal of marriage. I am convinced it is your own hand; and what more ſurpriſes me, is, that it is dated at the very time when you would have me imagine you was under ſuch concern on my account. — I leave you to comment on this fact. All I deſire is, that your name may never more be mentioned to

S. W.

Of the preſent ſituation of Mr. Jones's mind, and of the pangs with which he was now tormented, we cannot give the reader a better idea, than by ſaying, his miſery was ſuch, that even Thwackum would almoſt have pitied him. But bad as it is, we ſhall at preſent leave him in it, as his good genius (if he really had any) ſeems to have done. And here we put an end to the ſixteenth book of our hiſtory.

THE HISTORY OF A FOUNDLING.

BOOK XVII.

Containing three days.

CHAP. I.

Containing a portion of introductory writing.

When a comic writer hath made his principal characters as happy as he can; or when a tragic writer hath brought them to the higheſt pitch of human miſery, they both conclude their buſineſs to be done, and that their work is come to a period.

Had we been of the tragic complexion, the reader muſt allow we were very nearly arrived at this period, ſince it would be difficult for the devil, or any of his repreſentatives on earth, to have contrived much greater torments for poor Jones, than thoſe in which we left him in the laſt chapter; and as for Sophia, a good-natured woman would hardly wiſh more

uneaſineſs to a rival, than what ſhe muſt at preſent be ſuppoſed to feel. What then remains to complete the tragedy but a murder or two, and a few moral ſentences?

But to bring our favourites out of their preſent anguiſh and diſtreſs, and to land them at laſt on the ſhore of happineſs, ſeems a much harder taſk; a taſk indeed ſo hard that we do not undertake to execute it. In regard to Sophia, it is more than probable, that we ſhall ſomewhere or other provide a good huſband for her in the end, either Blifil, or my lord, or ſomebody elſe; but as to poor Jones, ſuch are the calamities in which he is at preſent involved, owing to his imprudence, by which, if a man doth not become a felon to the world, he is at leaſt a *Felo de ſe;* ſo deſtitute is he now of friends, and ſo perſecuted by enemies, that we almoſt deſpair of bringing him to any good; and if our reader delights in ſeeing executions, I think he ought not to loſe any time in taking a firſt row at Tyburn.

This I faithfully promiſe, that notwithſtanding any affection, which we may be ſuppoſed to have for this rogue, whom we have unfortunately made our hero, we will lend him none of that ſupernatural aſſiſtance with which we are entruſted, upon condition that we uſe it only on very important occaſions. If he doth not, therefore, find ſome natural means of fairly extricating himſelf from all his diſtreſſes, we will do no violence to the truth and dignity of hiſtory

for his ſake: for we had rather relate that he was hanged at Tyburn, (which may very probably be the caſe) than forfeit our integrity, or ſhock the faith of our reader.

In this the antients had a great advantage over the moderns. Their mythology, which was at that time more firmly believed by the vulgar than any religion is at preſent, gave them always an opportunity of delivering a favourite hero. Their deities were always ready at the writer's elbow, to execute any of his purpoſes; and the more extraordinary the invention was, the greater was the ſurpriſe and delight of the credulous reader. Thoſe writers could with greater eaſe have conveyed a friend from one country to another, nay, from one world to another, and have brought him back again, than a poor circumſcribed modern can deliver him from a gaol.

The Arabians and Perſians had an equal advantage in writing their tales from the Genii and Fairies, which they believe in as an article of their faith, upon the authority of the Koran itſelf. But we have none of theſe helps. To natural means alone we are confined; let us try, therefore, what by theſe means may be done for poor Jones; though, to confeſs the truth, ſomething whiſpers me in the ear, that he doth not yet know the worſt of his fortune; and that a more ſhocking piece of news than any he hath yet heard, remains for him in the unopened leaves of fate.

CHAP. II.

The generous and grateful behaviour of Mrs. Miller.

MR. Allworthy and Mrs. Miller were juſt ſat down to breakfaſt, when Blifil, who had gone out very early that morning, returned to make one of the company.

He had not been long ſeated before he began as follows: Good Lord! my dear uncle, what do you think hath happened? I vow I am afraid of telling it you, for fear of ſhocking you with the remembrance of ever having ſhewn any kindneſs to ſuch a villain. What is the matter, child? ſaid the uncle. I fear I have ſhewn kindneſs in my life to the unworthy more than once. But charity doth not adopt the vices of its objects. O! Sir, returned Blifil, it is not without the ſecret direction of providence that you mention the word adoption. Your adopted ſon, Sir, that Jones, that wretch whom you nouriſhed in your boſom, hath proved one of the greateſt villains upon earth. By all that's ſacred 'tis falſe, cries Mrs. Miller. Mr. Jones is no villain. He is one of the worthieſt creatures breathing; and if any other perſon had called him villain, I would have thrown all this boiling water in his face. Mr. Allworthy looked very much amazed at this behaviour,

But ſhe did not give him leave to ſpeak, before turning to him, ſhe cried: I hope you will not be angry with me; I would not offend you, Sir, for the world; but indeed I could not bear to hear him called ſo. I muſt own, Madam, ſaid Allworthy very gravely, I am a little ſurpriſed to hear you ſo warmly defend a fellow you do not know. O I do know him, Mr. Allworthy, ſaid ſhe, indeed I do; I ſhould be the moſt ungrateful of all wretches, if I denied it. O he hath preſerved me and my little family. We have all reaſon to bleſs him while we live. — And I pray heaven to bleſs him, and turn the hearts of his malicious enemies. I know, I find, I ſee he hath ſuch. You ſurpriſe me, Madam, ſtill more, ſaid Allworthy; ſure you muſt mean ſome other. It is impoſſible you ſhould have any ſuch obligations to the man my nephew mentions. Too ſurely, anſwered ſhe, I have obligations to him of the greateſt and tendereſt kind. He hath been the preſerver of me and mine. — Believe me, Sir, he hath been abuſed, groſsly abuſed to you; I know he hath; or you, whom I know to be all goodneſs and honour, would not, after the many kind and tender things I have heard you ſay of this poor helpleſs child, have ſo diſdainfully called him fellow. Indeed, my beſt of friends, he deſerves a kinder appellation from you, had you heard the good, the kind, the grateful things which I have heard him utter of you. He never mentions your name but with a ſort of adoration.

In this very room I have ſeen him on his knees, imploring all the bleſſings of heaven upon your head. I do not love that child there better than he loves you.

I ſee, Sir, now, ſaid Blifil, with one of thoſe grinning ſneers with which the devil marks his beſt beloved, Mrs. Miller really doth know him. I ſuppoſe you will find ſhe is not the only one of your acquaintance to whom he hath expoſed you. As for my character, I perceive by ſome hints ſhe hath thrown out, he hath been very free with it, but I forgive him. And the lord forgive you, Sir, ſays Mrs. Miller; we have all ſins enough to ſtand in need of his forgiveneſs.

Upon my word, Mrs. Miller, ſaid Allworthy, I do not take this behaviour of yours to my nephew, kindly; and I do aſſure you, as any reflections which you caſt upon him muſt come only from that wickedeſt of men, they would only ſerve, if that were poſſible, to heighten my reſentment againſt him: for I muſt tell you, Mrs. Miller, the young man who now ſtands before you, hath ever been the warmeſt advocate for the ungrateful wretch whoſe cauſe you eſpouſe. This, I think, when you hear it from my own mouth, will make you wonder at ſo much baſeneſs and ingratitude.

You are deceived, Sir, anſwered Mrs. Miller. If they were the laſt words which were to iſſue from my lips, I would ſay you were deceived; and I

once more repeat it, the lord forgive thoſe who have deceived you. I do not pretend to ſay the young man is without faults; but they are the faults of wildneſs and of youth; faults which he may, nay which I am certain he will, relinquiſh, and if he ſhould not, they are vaſtly overbalanced by one of the moſt humane, tender, honeſt hearts that ever man was bleſſed with.

Indeed, Mrs. Miller, ſaid Allworthy, had this been related of you, I ſhould not have believed it. Indeed, Sir, anſwered ſhe, you will believe every thing I have ſaid, I am ſure you will; and when you have heard the ſtory which I ſhall tell you (for I will tell you all) you will be ſo far from being offended, that you will own (I know your juſtice ſo well) that I muſt have been the moſt deſpicable and moſt ungrateful of wretches, if I had acted any other part than I have.

Well, Madam, ſaid Allworthy, I ſhall be very glad to hear any good excuſe for a behaviour, which, I muſt confeſs, I think wants an excuſe. And now, Madam, will you be pleaſed to let my nephew proceed in his ſtory without interruption? He would not have introduced a matter of ſlight conſequence with ſuch a preface. Perhaps even this ſtory will cure you of your miſtake.

Mrs. Miller gave tokens of ſubmiſſion, and then Mr. Blifil began thus: I am ſure, Sir, if you don't think proper to reſent the ill uſage of Mrs. Miller,

I ſhall eaſily forgive what affects me only. I think your goodneſs hath not deſerved this indignity at her hands. Well, child, ſaid Allworthy, but what is this new inſtance? What hath he done of late? What, cries Blifil, notwithſtanding all Mrs. Miller hath ſaid, I am very ſorry to relate, and what you ſhould never have heard from me, had it not been a matter impoſſible to conceal from the whole world. In ſhort, he hath killed a man; I will not ſay murdered, — for perhaps it may not be ſo conſtrued in law, and I hope the beſt for his ſake.

Allworthy looked ſhocked, and bleſſed himſelf; and then turning to Mrs. Miller, he cried: Well, Madam, what ſay you now?

Why, I ſay, Sir, anſwered ſhe, that I never was more concerned at any thing in my life; but, if the fact be true, I am convinced the man, whoever he is, was in fault. Heaven knows there are many villains in this town, who make it their buſineſs to provoke young gentlemen. Nothing but the greateſt provocation could have tempted him; for of all the gentlemen I ever had in my houſe, I never ſaw one ſo gentle, or ſo ſweet-tempered. He was beloved by every one in the houſe, and every one who came near it.

While ſhe was thus running on, a violent knocking at the door interrupted the converſation, and prevented her from proceeding further, or from receiving any anſwer; for as ſhe concluded this was a viſiter to

Mr. Allworthy, ſhe haſtily retired, taking with her her little girl, whoſe eyes were all over blubbered at the melancholy news ſhe heard of Jones, who uſed to call her his little wife, and not only gave her many play-things, but ſpent whole hours in playing with her himſelf.

Some readers may perhaps be pleaſed with theſe minute circumſtances, in relating of which we follow the example of Plutarch, one of the beſt of our brother hiſtorians; and others, to whom they may appear trivial, will, we hope, at leaſt pardon them, as we are never prolix on ſuch occaſions.

CHAP. III.

The arrival of Mr. Weſtern, with ſome matters concerning the paternal authority.

MRS. Miller had not long left the room, when Mr. Weſtern entered; but not before a ſmall wrangling bout had paſſed between him and his chairmen; for the fellows who had taken up their burden at the Hercules Pillars, conceived no hopes of having any future good cuſtomer in the 'ſquire; and they were moreover farther encouraged by his generoſity, (for he had given them of his own accord ſix-pence more than their fare;) they therefore very boldly demanded another ſhilling, which ſo provoked the

'ſquire, that he not only beſtowed many hearty curſes on them at the door, but retained his anger after he came into the room; ſwearing, that all the Londoners were like the court, and thought of nothing but plundering country gentlemen. D--n me, ſays he, if I won't walk in the rain rather than get into one of their hand-barrows again. They ha jolted me more in a mile than Brown Beſs would in a long fox chace.

When his wrath on this occaſion was a little appeaſed, he reſumed the ſame paſſionate tone on another. There, ſays he, there is fine buſineſs forwards now. The hounds ha changed at laſt, and when we imagined we had a fox to deal with, od-rat-it, it turns out to be a badger at laſt.

Pray, my good neighbour, ſaid Allworthy, drop your metaphors, and ſpeak a little plainer. Why, then, ſays the 'ſquire, to tell you plainly, we ha been all this time afraid of a ſon of a whore of a baſtard of ſome-body's, I don't know who's, not I — And now here is a confounded ſon of a whore of a lord, who may be a baſtard too for what I know or care, for he ſhall never ha a daughter of mine by my conſent. They ha beggared the nation, but they ſhall never beggar me. My land ſhall never be ſent over to Hanover.

You ſurpriſe me much, my good friend, ſaid Allworthy. Why, zounds! I am ſurpriſed myſelf, anſwered the 'ſquire. I went to zee ſiſter Weſtern

laſt night, according to her own appointment, and there I was a had into a whole room-full of women. — There was my lady couſin Bellaſton, and my lady Betty, and my lady Catharine, and my lady I don't know who; d — n me if ever you catch me among ſuch a kennel of hoop-pettitcoat b — s. D — n me, I'd rather be run by my own dogs, as one Acton was, that the ſtory-book ſays was turned into a hare; and his own dogs killed un, and eat un. Od-rabbet it, no mortal was ever run in ſuch a manner; if I dodged one way, one had me, if I offered to clap back, another ſnapped me. O! certainly, one of the greateſt matches in England, ſays one couſin, (here he attempted to mimic them;) A very advantageous offer indeed, cries another couſin, (for you muſt know they be all my couſins, thof I never zeed half o'um before.) Surely, ſays that fat a — ſe b —, my lady Bellaſton, couſin, you muſt be out of your wits to think of refuſing ſuch an offer.

Now I begin to underſtand, ſays Allworthy, ſome perſon hath made propoſals to Miſs Weſtern, which the ladies of the family approve, but it is not to your liking.

My liking! ſaid Weſtern, how the devil ſhould it? I tell you it is a lord, and thoſe are always volks whom you know I always reſolved to ha nothing to do with. Did unt I refuſe a matter of vorty years purchaſe now for a bit of land, which one o'um had a mind to put into a park, only becauſe I would ha

no dealings with lords, and doſt think I would marry my daughter zu? Beſides, ben't I engaged to you, and did I ever go off any bargain when I had promiſed?

As to that point, neighbour, ſaid Allworthy, I entirely releaſe you from any engagement. No contract can be binding between parties who have not a full power to make it at the time, nor ever afterwards acquire the power of fulfilling it.

Slud! then, anſwered Weſtern, I tell you I ha power, and I will fulfil it. Come along with me directly to Doctors Commons, I will get a licence; and I will go to ſiſter and take away the wench by force, and ſhe ſhall ha un, or I will lock her up, and keep her upon bread and water as long as ſhe lives.

Mr. Weſtern, ſaid Allworthy, ſhall I beg you will hear my full ſentiments on this matter? Hear thee! ay to be ſure, I will, anſwered he. Why then, Sir, cries Allworthy, I can truly ſay, without a compliment either to you or the young lady, that when this match was propoſed, I embraced it very readily and heartily, from my regard to you both. An alliance between two families ſo nearly neighbours, and between whom there had always exiſted ſo mutual an intercourſe and good harmony, I thought a moſt deſirable event; and with regard to the young lady, not only the concurrent opinion of all who knew her, but my own obſervation, aſſured me that ſhe would be an ineſtimable treaſure to a good

good huſband. I ſhall ſay nothing of her perſonal qualifications, which certainly are admirable; her good-nature, her charitable diſpoſition, her modeſty, are too well known to need any panegyric: but ſhe hath one quality which exiſted in a high degree in that beſt of women, who is now one of the firſt of angels, which as it is not of a glaring kind, more commonly eſcapes obſervation; ſo little indeed it is remarked, that I want a word to expreſs it. I muſt uſe negatives on this occaſion. I never heard any thing of pertneſs, or what is called repartee, out of her mouth; no pretence to wit, much leſs to that kind of wiſdom, which is the reſult only of great learning and experience; the affectation of which, in a young woman, is as abſurd as any of the affectations of an ape. No dictatorial ſentiments, no judicial opinions, no profound criticiſms. Whenever I have ſeen her in the company of men, ſhe hath been all attention, with the modeſty of a learner, not the forwardneſs of a teacher. You'll pardon me for it, but I once, to try her only, deſired her opinion on a point which was controverted between Mr. Thwackum and Mr. Square. To which ſhe anſwered with much ſweetneſs: You will pardon me, good Mr. Allworthy, I am ſure you cannot in earneſt think me capable of deciding any point in which two ſuch gentlemen diſagree. Thwackum and Square, who both alike thought themſelves ſure of a favourable deciſion, ſeconded my requeſt. She anſwered with

the ſame good humour: I muſt abſolutely be excuſed; for I will affront neither ſo much, as to give my judgment on his ſide. Indeed, ſhe always ſhewed the higheſt deference to the underſtandings of men; a quality abſolutely eſſential to the making a good wife. I ſhall only add, that as ſhe is moſt apparently void of all affectation, this deference muſt be certainly real.

Here Blifil ſighed bitterly; upon which Weſtern, whoſe eyes were full of tears at the praiſe of Sophia, blubbered out: Don't be chicken-hearted, for ſhat ha her, d—n me, ſhat ha her, if ſhe was twenty times as good.

Remember your promiſe, Sir, cried Allworthy, I was not to be interrupted. Well, ſhat unt, anſwered the 'ſquire, I won't ſpeak another word.

Now, my good friend, continued Allworthy, I have dwelt ſo long on the merit of this young lady, partly as I really am in love with her character, and partly that fortune) for the match in that light is really advantageous on my nephew's ſide) might not be imagined to be my principal view in having ſo eagerly embraced the propoſal. Indeed I heartily wiſhed to receive ſo great a jewel into my family; but though I may wiſh for many good things, I would not therefore ſteal them, or be guilty of any violence or injuſtice to poſſeſs myſelf of them. Now to force a woman into a marriage contrary to her conſent or approbation, is an act of ſuch

injuſtice and oppreſſion, that I wiſh the laws of our country could reſtrain it; but a good conſcience is never lawleſs in the worſt regulated ſtate, and will provide thoſe laws for itſelf, which the neglect of legiſlators hath forgotten to ſupply. This is ſurely a caſe of that kind; for it is not cruel, nay impious to force a woman into that ſtate againſt her will; for her behaviour in which ſhe is to be accountable to the higheſt and moſt dreadful court of judicature, and to anſwer at the peril of her ſoul? To diſcharge the matrimonial duties in an adequate manner is no eaſy taſk; and ſhall we lay this burthen upon a woman, while we at the ſame time deprive her of all that aſſiſtance which may enable her to undergo it? Shall we tear her very heart from her, while we enjoin her duties to which a whole heart is ſcarce equal? I muſt ſpeak very plainly here: I think parents who act in this manner are acceſſaries to all the guilt which their children afterwards incur, and of courſe muſt, before a juſt judge, expect to partake of their puniſhment; but if they could avoid this, good heaven! is there a ſoul who can bear the thought of having contributed to the damnation of his child?

For theſe reaſons, my beſt neighbour, as I ſee the inclinations of this young lady are moſt unhappily averſe to my nephew, I muſt decline any further thoughts of the honour you intended him, though I aſſure you I ſhall always retain the moſt grateful ſenſe of it.

Well, Sir, ſaid Weſtern, (the froth burſting forth from his lips the moment they were uncorked) you cannot ſay but I ha heard you out, and now I expect you'll hear me; and if I don't anſwer every word on't, why then I'll conſent to gee the matter up. Firſt then I deſire you to anſwer me one queſtion: Did not I beget her? Did not I beget her? anſwer me that. They ſay indeed it is a wiſe father that knows his own child; but I am ſure I ha the beſt title to her, for I bred her up. But I believe you will allow me to be her father; and if I be, am I not to govern my own child? I aſk you that, am I not to govern my own child? And if I am to govern her in other matters, ſurely I am to govern her in this which concerns her moſt. And what am I deſiring all this while? Am I deſiring her to do any thing for me? to gee me any thing? — Zu much on t'other ſide, that I am only deſiring her to take away half my eſteate now, and t'other half when I die. Well, and what is it all vor? Why is unt it to make her happy? It's enough to make one mad to hear volks talk; if I was going to marry myſelf, then ſhe would ha reaſon to cry and to blubber; but, on the contrary, han't I offered to bind down my land in ſuch a manner, that I could not marry if I would, ſeeing as narro' woman upon earth would ha me? What the devil in hell can I do more? I contribute to her damnation! — Zounds! I'd zee all the world d—n'd bevore her little vinger ſhould

be hurt. Indeed, Mr. Allworthy, you muſt excuſe me, but I am ſurpriſed to hear you talk in ſuch a manner, and I muſt ſay, take it how you will, that I thought you had more ſenſe.

Allworthy reſented this reflection only with a ſmile; nor could he, if he would have endeavoured it, have conveyed into that ſmile any mixture of malice or contempt. His ſmiles at folly were indeed ſuch as we may ſuppoſe the angels beſtow on the abſurdities of mankind.

Blifil now deſired to be permitted to ſpeak a few words. As to uſing any violence on the young lady, I am ſure I ſhall never conſent to it. My conſcience will not permit me to uſe violence on any one, much leſs on lady for whom, however cruel ſhe is to me, I ſhall always preſerve the pureſt and ſincereſt affection; but yet I have read, that women are ſeldom proof againſt perſeverance. Why may I not hope then by ſuch perſeverance at laſt to gain thoſe inclinations, in which for the future I ſhall, perhaps, have no rival? for as for this lord, Mr. Weſtern is ſo kind as to prefer me to him; and ſure, Sir, you will not deny but that a parent hath at leaſt a negative voice in theſe matters; nay, I have heard this very young lady herſelf ſay ſo, more than once, and declare, that ſhe thought children inexcuſable who married in direct oppoſition to the will of their parents. Beſides, though the other ladies of the family ſeem to favour the pretenſions of my lord, I

do not find the lady herſelf is inclined to give him any countenance; alas! I am too well aſſured ſhe is not; I am too ſenſible that wickedeſt of men remains uppermoſt in her heart.

Ay, ay, ſo he does, cries Weſtern.

But ſurely, ſays Blifil, when ſhe hears of this murder, which he hath committed, if the law ſhould ſpare his life —

What's that? cries Weſtern, murder! hath he committed a murder, and is there any hopes of zeeing him hanged? — Tol de rol, tol lol de rol. Here he fell a ſinging and capering about the room.

Child, ſays Allworthy, this unhappy paſſion of yours diſtreſſes me beyond meaſure. I heartily pity you, and would do every fair thing to promote your ſucceſs.

I deſire no more, cries Blifil, I am convinced my dear uncle hath a better opinion of me than to think that I myſelf would accept of more.

Lookee, ſays Allworthy, you have my leave to write, to viſit, if ſhe will permit it; — but I inſiſt on no thoughts of violence. I will have no confinement, nothing of that kind attempted.

Well, well, cries the 'ſquire, nothing of that kind ſhall be attempted; we will try a little longer what fair means will effect; and if this fellow be but hanged out of the way — Tol lol de rol. I never heard better news in my life; I warrant every thing goes to my mind. — Do, prithee, dear Allworthy,

come and dine with me at the Hercules Pillars: I ha beſpoke a ſhoulder of mutton roaſted, and a ſpare-rib of pork, and a fowl and egg-ſauce. There will be nobody but ourſelves, unleſs we ha a mind to ha the landlord; for I ha ſent parſon Supple down to Baſingſtoke after my tobacco-box, which I left at an inn there, and I would not loſe it for the world; for it is an old acquaintance of above twenty years ſtanding. I can tell you landlord is a vaſt comical bitch, you will like un hugely.

Mr. Allworthy at laſt agreed to this invitation, and ſoon after the 'ſquire went off, ſinging and capering at the hopes of ſeeing the ſpeedy tragical end of poor Jones.

When he was gone, Mr. Allworthy reſumed the aforeſaid ſubject with much gravity. He told his nephew, he wiſhed with all his heart he would endeavour to conquer a paſſion, in which I cannot, ſays he, flatter you with any hopes of ſucceeding. It is certainly a vulgar error, that averſion in a woman may be conquered by perſeverance. Indifference may, perhaps, ſometimes yield to it; but the uſual triumphs gained by perſeverance in a lover, are over caprice, imprudence, affectation, and often an exorbitant degree of levity, which excites women, not over-warm in their conſtitutions, to indulge their vanity by prolonging the time of courtſhip, even when they are well-enough pleaſed with the object, and reſolve (if they ever reſolve at all) to

make him a very pitiful amends in the end. But a fixed diſlike, as I am afraid this is, will rather gather ſtrength, than be conquered by time. Beſides, my dear, I have another apprehenſion which you muſt excuſe. I am afraid this paſſion which you have for this fine young creature, hath her beautiful perſon too much for its object, and is unworthy of the name of that love, which is the only foundation of matrimonial felicity. To admire, to like, and to long for the poſſeſſion of a beautiful woman, without any regard to her ſentiments towards us, is, I am afraid, too natural: but love, I believe, is the child of love only; at leaſt, I am pretty confident, that to love the creature who we are aſſured hates us, is not in human nature. Examine your heart, therefore, thoroughly, my good boy, and if, upon examination, you have but the leaſt ſuſpicion of this kind, I am ſure your own virtue and religion will impel you to drive ſo vicious a paſſion from your heart, and your good ſenſe will ſoon enable you to do it without pain.

The reader may pretty well gueſs Blifil's anſwer; but if he ſhould be at a loſs, we are not, at preſent, at leiſure to ſatisfy him, as our hiſtory now haſtens on to matters of higher importance, and we can no longer bear to be abſent from Sophia.

CHAP. IV.

An extraordinary ſcene between Sophia and her aunt.

THE lowing heifer, and the bleating ewe, in herds and flocks, may ramble ſafe and unregarded through the paſtures. Theſe are, indeed, hereafter doomed to be the prey of man; yet many years are they ſuffered to enjoy their liberty undiſturbed. But if a plump doe be diſcovered to have eſcaped from the foreſt, and to repoſe herſelf in ſome field or grove, the whole pariſh is preſently alarmed, every man is ready to ſet his dogs after her; and if ſhe is preſerved from the reſt by the good 'ſquire, it is only that he may ſecure her for his own eating.

I have often conſidered a very fine young woman of fortune and faſhion, when firſt found ſtrayed from the pale of her nurſery, to be in pretty much the ſame ſituation with this doe. The town is immediately in an uproar, ſhe is hunted from park to play, from court to aſſembly, from aſſembly to her own chamber, and rarely eſcapes a ſingle ſeaſon from the jaws of ſome devourer or other: for if her friends protect her from ſome, it is only to deliver her over to one of their own chuſing, often more diſagreeable to her than any of the reſt: while whole herds or flocks of other women ſecurely, and ſcarce regarded, traverſe the park, the play, the opera, and the aſſembly; and

though, for the moſt part at leaſt, they are at laſt devoured, yet for a long time do they wanton in liberty, without diſturbance or controul.

Of all theſe paragons, none ever taſted more of this perſecution than poor Sophia. Her ill ſtars were not contented with all that ſhe had ſuffered on account of Blifil; they now raiſed her another purſuer, who ſeemed likely to torment her no leſs than the other had done. For though her aunt was leſs violent, ſhe was no leſs aſſiduous in teazing her, than her father had been before.

The ſervants were no ſooner departed after dinner, than Mrs. Weſtern, who had opened the matter to Sophia, informed her, that ſhe expected his lordſhip that very afternoon, and intended to take the firſt opportunity of leaving her alone with him. If you do, Madam, anſwered Sophia, with ſome ſpirit, I ſhall take the firſt opportunity of leaving him by himſelf. How! Madam! cries the aunt; is this the return you make me for my kindneſs, in relieving you from your confinement at your father's? You know, Madam, ſays Sophia, the cauſe of that confinement was a refuſal to comply with my father, in accepting a man I deteſted; and will my dear aunt, who hath relieved me from that diſtreſs, involve me in another equally bad? And do you think then, Madam, anſwered Mrs. Weſtern, that there is no difference between my lord Fellamar and Mr. Blifil? Very little, in my opinion, cries Sophia: and if I

muſt be condemned to one, I would certainly have the merit of ſacrificing myſelf to my father's pleaſure. Then my pleaſure, I find, ſaid the aunt, hath very little weight with you; but that conſideration ſhall not move me. I act from nobler motives. The view of aggrandizing my family, of ennobling yourſelf, is what I proceed upon. Have you no ſenſe of ambition? Are there no charms in the thoughts of having a coronet on your coach? None, upon my honour, ſaid Sophia. A pincuſhion upon my coach would pleaſe me juſt as well. Never mention honour, cries the aunt; it becomes not the mouth of ſuch a wretch. I am ſorry, niece, you force me to uſe theſe words, but I cannot bear your groveling temper; you have none of the blood of the Weſterns in you. But however mean and baſe your own ideas are, you ſhall bring no imputation on mine. I will never ſuffer the world to ſay of me, that I encouraged you in refuſing one of the beſt matches in England; a match which, beſides its advantage in fortune, would do honour to almoſt any family, and hath indeed, in title, the advantage of ours. Surely, ſays Sophia, I am born deficient, and have not the ſenſes with which other people are bleſſed; there muſt be certainly ſome ſenſe which can reliſh the delights of ſound and ſhow, which I have not: for ſurely mankind would not labour ſo much, nor ſacrifice ſo much for the obtaining, nor would they be ſo elate and proud with poſſeſſing, what appeared to them, as it doth to

me, the moſt inſignificant of all trifles.

No, no, Miſs; cries the aunt; you are born with as many ſenſes as other people; but I aſſure you, you are not born with a ſufficient underſtanding to make a fool of me, or to expoſe my conduct to the world. So I declare this to you upon my word, and you know, I believe, how fixed my reſolutions are, unleſs you agree to ſee his lordſhip this afternoon, I will, with my own hands, deliver you to-morrow morning to my brother, and will never henceforth interfere with you, nor ſee your face again. Sophia ſtood a few moments ſilent after this ſpeech, which was uttered in a moſt angry and peremptory tone; and then burſting into tears, ſhe cry'd: Do with me, Madam, whatever you pleaſe; I am the moſt miſerable, undone wretch upon earth: if my dear aunt forſakes me, where ſhall I look for a protector? — My dear niece, cries ſhe, you will have a very good protector in his lordſhip; a protector, whom nothing but a hankering after that vile fellow Jones can make you decline. Indeed, Madam, ſaid Sophia, you wrong me. How can you imagine, after what you have ſhewn me, if I had ever any ſuch thoughts, that I ſhould not baniſh them for ever? If it will ſatisfy you, I will receive the ſacrament upon it, never to ſee his face again. — But child, dear child, ſaid the aunt, be reaſonable: can you invent a ſingle objection? — I have already, I think, told you a ſufficient objection, anſwered Sophia. — What, cries the aunt;

I remember none. Sure, Madam, ſaid Sophia, I told you he had uſed me in the rudeſt and vileſt manner. Indeed, child, anſwered ſhe, I never heard you, or did not underſtand you. — But what do you mean by this rude and vile manner? Indeed, Madam, ſaid Sophia, I am almoſt aſhamed to tell you. He caught me in his arms, pulled me down upon the ſettee, and thruſt his hand into my boſom, and kiſſed it with ſuch violence, that I have the mark upon my left breaſt at this moment. — Indeed? ſaid Mrs. Weſtern. Yes indeed, Madam, anſwered Sophia; my father luckily came in at that inſtant, or heaven knows what rudeneſs he intended to have proceeded to. I am aſtoniſhed and confounded, cries the aunt. No woman of the name of Weſtern hath been ever treated ſo, ſince we were a family. I would have torn the eyes of a prince out, if he had attempted ſuch freedoms with me. It is impoſſible: ſure, Sophia, you muſt invent this to raiſe my indignation againſt him. I hope, Madam, ſaid Sophia, you have too good an opinion of me, to imagine me capable of telling an untruth. Upon my ſoul it is true. I ſhould have ſtabbed him to the heart, had I been preſent, returned the aunt. Yet ſurely he could have no diſhonourable deſign: it is impoſſible; he durſt not: beſides, his propoſals ſhew he had not; for they are not only honourable but generous. I don't know; the age allows too great freedoms. A diſtant ſalute is all I would have allowed before the

ceremony. I have had lovers formerly, not ſo long ago neither; ſeveral lovers, though I never would conſent to marriage, and I never encouraged the leaſt freedom. It is a fooliſh cuſtom, and what I never would agree to. No man kiſſed more of me than my cheek. It is as much as one can bring one's ſelf to give lips up to a huſband; and, indeed, could I ever have been perſuaded to marry, I believe I ſhould not have ſoon been brought to endure ſo much. You will pardon me, dear Madam, ſaid Sophia, if I make one obſervation: you own you have had many lovers; and the world knows it, even if you would deny it. You refuſed them all, and, I am convinced, one coronet at leaſt among them. You ſay true, dear Sophy, anſwered ſhe; I had once the offer of a title. Why then, ſaid Sophia, will you not ſuffer me to refuſe this once? It is true, child, ſaid ſhe, I have refuſed the offer of a title; but it was not ſo good an offer; that is, not ſo very, very good an offer. —Yes, Madam, ſaid Sophia; but you have had very great propoſals from men of vaſt fortunes. It was not the firſt, nor the ſecond, nor the third advantageous match that offered itſelf. I own it was not, ſaid ſhe. Well, Madam, continued Sophia, and why may not I expect to have a ſecond perhaps better than this? You are now but a young woman, and I am convinced would not promiſe to yield to the firſt lover of fortune, nay, or of title too. I am a very young woman, and ſure I need not

deſpair. Well, my dear, dear Sophy, cries the aunt, what would you have me ſay? Why I only beg that I may not be left alone, at leaſt this evening: grant me that, and I will ſubmit, if you think, after what is paſt, I ought to ſee him in your company. Well, I will grant it, cries the aunt. Sophy, you know I love you, and can deny you nothing. You know the eaſineſs of my nature; I have not always been ſo eaſy. I have been formerly thought cruel, by the men I mean. I was called the cruel Partheniſſa. I have broke many a window that has had verſes to the cruel Partheniſſa in it. Sophy, I was never ſo handſome as you, and yet I had ſomething of you formerly. I am a little altered. Kingdoms and ſtates, as Tully Cicero ſays in his epiſtles, undergo alterations, and ſo muſt the human form. Thus run ſhe on for near half an hour upon herſelf, and her conqueſts and her cruelty, 'till the arrival of my lord, who, after a moſt tedious viſit, during which Mrs. Weſtern never once offered to leave the room, retired, not much more ſatisfied with the aunt than with the niece. For Sophia had brought her aunt into ſo excellent a temper, that ſhe conſented to almoſt every thing her niece ſaid; and agreed, that a little diſtant behaviour might not be improper to ſo forward a lover.

Thus Sophia, by a little well-directed flattery, for which ſurely none will blame her, obtained a little eaſe for herſelf, and, at leaſt, put off the evil day. And now we have ſeen our heroine in a better

ſituation than ſhe hath been for a long time before, we will look a little after Mr. Jones, whom we left in the moſt deplorable ſituation that can well be imagined.

CHAP. V.

Mrs. Miller and Mr. Nightingale viſit Jones in the priſon.

WHEN Mr. Allworthy and his nephew went to meet Mr. Weſtern, Mrs. Miller ſet forwards to her ſon-in-law's lodgings, in order to acquaint him with the accident which had befallen his friend Jones; but he had known it long before from Partridge, (for Jones, when he left Mrs. Miller, had been furniſhed with a room in the ſame houſe with Mr. Nightingale.) The good woman found her daughter under great affliction on account of Mr. Jones, whom having comforted as well as ſhe could, ſhe ſet forwards to the Gate-houſe, where ſhe heard he was, and where Mr. Nightingale was arrived before her.

The firmneſs and conſtancy of a true friend is a circumſtance ſo extremely delightful to perſons in any kind of diſtreſs, that the diſtreſs itſelf, if it be only temporary, and admits of relief, is more than compenſated by bringing this comfort with it. Nor are inſtances of this kind ſo rare, as ſome ſuperficial and inaccurate obſervers have reported. To ſay the truth,

truth, want of compaſſion is not to be numbered among our general faults. The black ingredient which fouls our diſpoſition is envy. Hence our eye is ſeldom, I am afraid, turned upwards to thoſe who are manifeſtly greater, better, wiſer, or happier than ourſelves, without ſome degree of malignity; while we commonly look downwards on the mean and miſerable, with ſufficient benevolence and pity. In fact, I have remarked, that moſt of the defects which have diſcovered themſelves in the friendſhips within my obſervation, have ariſen from envy only; a helliſh vice; and yet one from which I have known very few abſolutely exempt. But enough of a ſubject which, if purſued, would lead me too far.

Whether it was that fortune was apprehenſive leſt Jones ſhould ſink under the weight of his adverſity, and that ſhe might thus loſe any future opportunity of tormenting him; or whether ſhe really abated ſomewhat of her ſeverity towards him, ſhe ſeemed a little to relax her perſecution, by ſending him the company of two ſuch faithful friends, and what is perhaps more rare, a faithful ſervant. For Partridge, though he had many imperfections, wanted not fidelity; and though fear would not ſuffer him to be hanged for his maſter, yet the world, I believe, could not have bribed him to deſert his cauſe.

While Jones was expreſſing great ſatisfaction in the preſence of his friends, Partridge brought an account, that Mr. Fitzpatrick was ſtill alive, though

the ſurgeon declared that he had very little hopes. Upon which Jones fetching a deep ſigh, Nightingale ſaid to him: My dear Tom, why ſhould you afflict yourſelf ſo upon an accident, which, whatever be the conſequence, can be attended with no danger to you, and in which your conſcience cannot accuſe you of having been in the leaſt to blame? If the fellow ſhould die, what have you done more than taken away the life of a ruffian in your own defence? So will the coroner's inqueſt certainly find it; and then you will be eaſily admitted to bail: and though you muſt undergo the form of a trial, yet it is a trial which many men would ſtand for you for a ſhilling. Come, come, Mr. Jones, ſaid Mrs. Miller, chear yourſelf up. I knew you could not be the aggreſſor, and ſo I told Mr. Allworthy, and ſo he ſhall acknowledge too before I have done with him.

Jones gravely anſwered, that, whatever might be his fate, he ſhould always lament the having ſhed the blood of one of his fellow-creatures, as one of the higheſt misfortunes which could have befallen him. But I have another misfortune of the tendereſt kind. — O! Mrs. Miller: I have loſt what I held moſt dear upon earth. That muſt be a miſtreſs, ſaid Mrs. Miller, but come, come; I know more than you imagine; (for indeed Partridge had blabbed all) and I have heard more than you know. Matters go better, I promiſe you, than you think; and I would not give Blifil ſix-pence for all the chance

which he hath of the lady.

Indeed, my dear friend, indeed, anſwered Jones, you are an entire ſtranger to the cauſe of my grief. If you was acquainted with the ſtory, you would allow my caſe admitted of no comfort. I apprehend no danger from Blifil. I have undone myſelf. Don't deſpair, replied Mrs. Miller; you know not what a woman can do: and if any thing be in my power, I promiſe you I will do it to ſerve you. It is my duty. My ſon, my dear Mr. Nightingale, who is ſo kind to tell me he hath obligations to you on the ſame account, knows it is my duty. Shall I go to the lady myſelf? I will ſay any thing to her you would have me ſay.

Thou beſt of women, cries Jones, taking her by the hand, talk not of obligations to me; — but, as you have been ſo kind to mention it, there is a favour which, perhaps, may be in your power. I ſee you are acquainted with the lady, (how you came by your information I know not) who ſits indeed very near my heart. If you could contrive to deliver this, (giving her a paper from his pocket) I ſhall for ever acknowledge your goodneſs.

Give it me, ſaid Mrs. Miller. If I ſee it not in her own poſſeſſion before I ſleep, may my next ſleep be my laſt. Comfort yourſelf, my good young man; be wiſe enough to take warning from paſt follies, and I warrant all ſhall be well, and I ſhall yet ſee you happy with the moſt charming young

lady in the world; for ſo I hear from every one ſhe is.

Believe me, Madam, ſaid he, I do not ſpeak the common cant of one in my unhappy ſituation. Before this dreadful accident happened, I had reſolved to quit a life of which I was become ſenſible of the wickedneſs as well as folly. I do aſſure you, notwithſtanding the diſturbances I have unfortunately occaſioned in your houſe, for which I heartily aſk your pardon, I am not an abandoned profligate. Though I have been hurried into vices, I do not approve a vicious character; nor will I ever, from this moment, deſerve it.

Mrs. Miller expreſſed great ſatisfaction in theſe declarations, in the ſincerity of which ſhe averred ſhe had an entire faith: and now the remainder of the converſation paſt in the joint attempts of that good woman and Mr. Nightingale, to cheer the dejected ſpirits of Mr. Jones, in which they ſo far ſucceeded, as to leave him much better comforted and ſatisfied than they found him; to which happy alteration nothing ſo much contributed as the kind undertaking of Mrs. Miller, to deliver his letter to Sophia, which he deſpaired of finding any means to accompliſh: for when Black George produced the laſt from Sophia, he informed Partridge, that ſhe had ſtrictly charged him, on pain of having it communicated to her father, not to bring her any anſwer. He was moreover not a little pleaſed, to

find he had ſo warm an advocate to Mr. Allworthy himſelf in this good woman who was in reality, one of the worthieſt creatures in the world.

After about an hour's viſit from the lady, (for Nightingale had been with him much longer) they both took their leave, promiſing to return to him ſoon; during which Mrs. Miller ſaid, ſhe hoped to bring him ſome good news from his miſtreſs, and Mr. Nightingale promiſed to enquire into the ſtate of Mr. Fitzpatrick's wound, and likewiſe to find out ſome of the perſons who were preſent at the rencounter.

The former of theſe went directly in queſt of Sophia, whither we likewiſe ſhall now attend her.

CHAP. VI.

In which Mrs. Miller pays a viſit to Sophia.

ACCESS to the young lady was by no means difficult; for as ſhe lived now on a perfect friendly footing with her aunt, ſhe was at full liberty to receive what viſitants ſhe pleaſed.

Sophia was dreſſing, when ſhe was acquainted, that there was a gentlewoman below to wait on her. As ſhe was neither afraid, nor aſhamed, to ſee any of her own ſex, Mrs. Miller was immediately admitted.

Curt'ſies, and the uſual ceremonials between women who are ſtrangers to each other, being paſt, Sophia ſaid: I have not the pleaſure to know you, Madam. No, Madam, anſwered Mrs. Miller, and I muſt beg pardon for intruding upon you. But when you know what has induced me to give you this trouble, I hope — Pray, what is your buſineſs, Madam? ſaid Sophia, with a little emotion. Madam, we are not alone, replied Mrs. Miller, in a low voice. Go out, Betty, ſaid Sophia.

When Betty was departed, Mrs. Miller ſaid: I was deſired, Madam, by a very unhappy young gentleman, to deliver you this letter. Sophia changed colour when ſhe ſaw the direction, well knowing the hand, and after ſome heſitation, ſaid: — I could not conceive, Madam, from your appearance, that your buſineſs had been of ſuch a nature. — Whomever you brought this letter from, I ſhall not open it. I ſhould be ſorry to entertain an unjuſt ſuſpicion of any one; but you are an utter ſtranger to me.

If you will have patience, Madam, anſwered Mrs. Miller, I will acquaint you who I am, and how I came by that letter. I have no curioſity, Madam, to know any thing, cries Sophia; but I muſt inſiſt on your delivering that letter back to the perſon who gave it you.

Mrs. Miller then fell upon her knees, and in the moſt paſſionate terms, implored her compaſſion; to

which Sophia anſwered: Sure, Madam, it is ſurpriſing you ſhould be ſo very ſtrongly intereſted in the behalf of this perſon. I would not think, Madam, — No, Madam, ſays Mrs. Miller, you ſhall not think any thing but the truth. I will tell you all, and you will not wonder that I am intereſted. He is the beſt natured creature that ever was born. — She then began and related the ſtory of Mr. Henderſon. — After this ſhe cried: This, Madam, this is his goodneſs; but I have much more tender obligations to him. He hath preſerved my child. — Here, after ſhedding ſome tears, ſhe related every thing concerning that fact, ſuppreſſing only thoſe circumſtances which would have moſt reflected on her daughter, and concluded with ſaying: Now, Madam, you ſhall judge whether I can ever do enough for ſo kind, ſo good, ſo generous a young man: and ſure he is the beſt and worthieſt of all human beings.

The alterations in the countenance of Sophia had hitherto been chiefly to her diſadvantage, and had inclined her complexion to too great paleneſs; but ſhe now waxed reeder, if poſſible, than vermilion, and cried: I know not what to ſay; certainly what ariſes from gratitude cannot be blamed. — But what ſervice can my reading this letter do your friend, ſince I am reſolved never — Mrs. Miller fell again to her entreaties, and begged to be forgiven, but ſhe could not, ſhe ſaid, carry it back. Well, Madam,

ſays Sophia, I cannot help it, if you will force it upon me. —— Certainly you may leave it whether I will or no. What Sophia meant, or whether ſhe meant any thing, I will not preſume to determine: but Mrs. Miller actually underſtood this as a hint, and preſently laying the letter down on the table, took her leave, having firſt begged permiſſion to wait again on Sophia; which requeſt had neither aſſent nor denial.

The letter lay upon the table no longer than till Mrs. Miller was out of ſight; for then Sophia opened and read it.

This letter did very little ſervice to his cauſe; for it conſiſted of little more than confeſſions of his own unworthineſs, and bitter lamentations of deſpair, together with the moſt ſolemn proteſtations of his unalterable fidelity to Sophia, of which, he ſaid, he hoped to convince her, if he had ever more the honour of being admitted to her preſence; and that he could account for the letter to lady Bellaſton, in ſuch a manner, that, though it would not entitle him to her forgiveneſs, he hoped at leaſt to obtain it from her mercy. And concluded with vowing, that nothing was ever leſs in his thoughts than to marry lady Bellaſton.

Though Sophia read the letter twice over with great attention, his meaning ſtill remained a riddle to her; nor could her invention ſuggeſt to her any means to excuſe Jones. She certainly remained very

angry with him, though indeed lady Bellaſton took up ſo much of her reſentment, that her gentle mind had but little left to beſtow on any other perſon.

That lady was moſt unluckily to dine this very day with her aunt Weſtern, and in the afternoon, they were all three, by appointment, to go together to the opera, and thence to lady Thomas Hatchet's drum. Sophia would have gladly been excuſed from all, but ſhe would not diſoblige her aunt; and as to the arts of counterfeiting illneſs, ſhe was ſo entirely a ſtranger to them, that it never once entered into her head. When ſhe was dreſt, therefore, down ſhe went, reſolved to encounter all the horrors of the day, and a moſt diſagreeable one it proved; for lady Bellaſton took every opportunity very civilly and ſlily to inſult her; to all which her dejection of ſpirits diſabled her from making any return; and indeed, to confeſs the truth, ſhe was at the very beſt but an indifferent miſtreſs of repartee.

Another misfortune which befel poor Sophia, was the company of lord Fellamar, whom ſhe met at the opera, and who attended her to the drum. And though both places were too public to admit of any particularities, and ſhe was farther relieved by the muſic at the one place, and by the cards at the other, ſhe could not however enjoy herſelf in his company: for there is ſomething of delicacy in women, which will not ſuffer them to be even eaſy in the preſence of a man whom they know to have

pretenſions to them, which they are diſinclined to favour.

Having in this chapter twice mentioned a drum, a word which our poſterity, it is hoped, will not underſtand in the ſenſe it is here applied, we ſhall, notwithſtanding our preſent haſte, ſtop a moment to deſcribe the entertainment here meant, and the rather as we can in a moment deſcribe it.

A drum then, is an aſſembly of well dreſſed perſons of both ſexes, moſt of whom play at cards, and the reſt do nothing at all; while the miſtreſs of the houſe performs the part of the landlady at an inn, and like the landlady of an inn prides herſelf in the number of her gueſts, though ſhe doth not always, like her, get any thing by it.

No wonder then, as ſo much ſpirits muſt be required to ſupport any vivacity in theſe ſcenes of dulneſs, that we hear perſons of faſhion eternally complaining of the want of them; a complaint confined entirely to upper life. How unſupportable muſt we imagine this round of impertinence to have been to Sophia, at this time! How difficult muſt ſhe have found it to force the appearance of gaiety into her looks, when her mind dictated nothing but the tendereſt ſorrow, and when every thought was charged with tormenting ideas!

Night, however, at laſt reſtored her to her pillow, where we will leave her to ſooth her melancholy at leaſt, though incapable we fear of reſt, and ſhall

purſue our hiſtory, which ſomething whiſpers us, is now arrived at the eve of ſome great event.

CHAP. VII.

A pathetic ſcene between Mr Allworthy and Mrs. Miller.

MRS. Miller had a long diſcourſe with Mr. Allworthy, at his return from dinner, in which ſhe acquainted him with Mr. Jones's having unfortunately loſt all which he was pleaſed to beſtow on him at their ſeparation; and with the diſtreſſes to which that loſs had ſubjected him; of all which ſhe had received a full account from the faithful retailer Partridge. She then explained the obligations ſhe had to Jones; not that ſhe was entirely explicit with regard to her daughter: for though ſhe had the utmoſt confidence in Mr. Allworthy, and though there could be no hopes of keeping an affair ſecret, which was unhappily known to more than half a dozen; yet ſhe could not prevail with herſelf to mention thoſe circumſtances which reflected moſt on the chaſtity of poor Nancy; but ſmothered that part of her evidence as cautiouſly as if ſhe had been before a judge, and the girl was now on her trial for the murder of a baſtard.

Allworthy ſaid, there were few characters ſo

abſolutely vicious as not to have the leaſt mixture of good in them. However, ſays he, I cannot deny but that you had ſome obligations to the fellow, bad as he is, and I ſhall therefore excuſe what hath paſt already, but muſt inſiſt you never mention his name to me more; for I promiſe you, it was upon the fulleſt and plaineſt evidence that I reſolved to take the meaſures I have taken. Well, Sir, ſays ſhe, I make not the leaſt doubt, but time will ſhew all matters in their true and natural colours, and that you will be convinced this poor young man deſerves better of you than ſome other folks that ſhall be nameleſs.

Madam, cries Allworthy, a little ruffled, I will not hear any reflections on my nephew; and if you ever ſay a word more of that kind, I will depart from your houſe that inſtant. He is the worthieſt and beſt of men; and I once more repeat it to you, he hath carried his friendſhip to this man to a blameable length, by too long concealing facts of the blackeſt die. The ingratitude of the wretch to this good young man is what I moſt reſent: for, Madam, I have the greateſt reaſon to imagine he had laid a plot to ſupplant my nephew in my favour, and to have diſinherited him.

I am ſure, Sir, anſwered Mrs. Miller, a little frightened, (for, though Mr. Allworthy had the utmoſt ſweetneſs and benevolence in his ſmiles, he had great terror in his frowns) I ſhall never ſpeak againſt any gentleman you are pleaſed to think well

of. I am ſure, Sir, ſuch behaviour would very little become me, eſpecially when the gentleman is your neareſt relation; but, Sir, you muſt not be angry with me, you muſt not indeed, for my good wiſhes to this poor wretch. Sure I may call him ſo now, though once you would have been angry with me, if I had ſpoke of him with the leaſt diſreſpect. How often have I heard you call him your ſon! How often have you prattled to me of him, with all the fondneſs of a parent! Nay, Sir, I cannot forget the many tender expreſſions, the many good things you have told me of his beauty, and his parts, and his virtues; of his good-nature and generoſity. — I am ſure, Sir, I cannot forget them; for I find them all true. I have experienced them in my own cauſe. They have preſerved my family. You muſt pardon my tears, Sir, indeed you muſt, when I conſider the cruel reverſe of fortune which this poor youth, to whom I am ſo much obliged, hath ſuffered: when I conſider the loſs of your favour, which I know he valued more than his life, I muſt, I muſt lament him. If you had a dagger in your hand, ready to plunge into my heart, I muſt lament the miſery of one whom you have loved, and I ſhall ever love.

Allworthy was pretty much moved with this ſpeech, but it ſeemed not to be with anger: for after a ſhort ſilence, taking Mrs. Miller by the hand, he ſaid very affectionately to her: Come, Madam, let us conſider a little about your daughter. I cannot

blame you, for rejoicing in a match which promiſes to be advantageous to her; but you know this advantage, in a great meaſure, depends on the father's reconciliation. I know Mr. Nightingale very well, and have formerly had concerns with him; I will make him a viſit, and endeavour to ſerve you in this matter. I believe he is a worldly man; but as this is an only ſon, and the thing is now irretrievable, perhaps he may in time be brought to reaſon. I promiſe you I will do all I can for you.

Many were the acknowledgments which the poor woman made to Allworthy, for this kind and generous offer; nor could ſhe refrain from taking this occaſion again to expreſs her gratitude towards Jones, to whom, ſaid ſhe, I owe the opportunity of giving you, Sir, this preſent trouble. Allworthy gently ſtopped her; but he was too good a man to be really offended with the effects of ſo noble a principle as now actuated Mrs. Miller; and indeed had not this new affair inflamed his former anger againſt Jones, it is poſſible he might have been a little ſoftened towards him, by the report of an action which malice itſelf could not have derived from an evil motive.

Mr. Allworthy and Mrs. Miller had been above an hour together, when their converſation was put an end to, by the arrival of Blifil, and another perſon, which other perſon was no leſs than Mr. Dowling, the attorney, who was now become a great favourite with Mr. Blifil, and whom Mr. Allworthy, at the

deſire of his nephew, had made his ſteward; and had likewiſe recommended him to Mr. Weſtern, from whom the attorney received a promiſe of being promoted to the ſame office upon the firſt vacancy; and in the mean time, was employed in tranſacting ſome affairs which the 'ſquire then had in London, in relation to a mortgage.

This was the principal affair which then brought Mr. Dowling to town; therefore he took the ſame opportunity to charge himſelf with ſome money for Mr. Allworthy, and to make a report to him of ſome other buſineſs; in all which, as it was of much too dull a nature to find any place in this hiſtory, we will leave the uncle, nephew, and their lawyer concerned, and reſort to other matters.

CHAP. VIII.

Containing various matters.

BEFORE we return to Mr. Jones, we will take one more view of Sophia.

Though that young lady had brought her aunt into great good humour by thoſe ſoothing methods, which we have before related, ſhe had not brought her in the leaſt to abate of her real for the match with lord Fellamar. This zeal was now inflamed by lady Bellaſton, who had told her the preceding

evening, that ſhe was well ſatisfied from the conduct of Sophia, and from her carriage to his lordſhip, that all delays would be dangerous, and that the only way to ſucceed, was to preſs the match forward with ſuch rapidity, that the young lady ſhould have no time to reflect, and be obliged to conſent, while ſhe ſcarce knew what ſhe did. In which manner, ſhe ſaid, one half of the marriages among people of condition were brought about. A fact very probably true, and to which, I ſuppoſe, is owing the mutual tenderneſs which afterwards exiſts among ſo many happy couples.

A hint of the ſame kind was given by the ſame lady to lord Fellamar; and both theſe ſo readily embraced the advice, that the very next day was, at his lordſhip's requeſt, appointed by Mrs. Weſtern for a private interview between the young parties. This was communicated to Sophia by her aunt, and inſiſted upon in ſuch high terms, that, after having urged every thing ſhe could poſſibly invent againſt it, without the leaſt effect, ſhe at laſt agreed to give the higheſt inſtance of complaiſance which any young lady can give, and conſented to ſee his lordſhip.

As converſations of this kind afford no great entertainment, we ſhall be excuſed from reciting the whole that paſt at this interview; in which, after his lordſhip had made many declarations of the moſt pure and ardent paſſion, to the ſilent, bluſhing Sophia; ſhe at laſt collected all the ſpirits ſhe could raiſe, and with

with a trembling low voice ſaid: My lord, you muſt be yourſelf conſcious whether your former behaviour to me hath been conſiſtent with the profeſſions you now make. Is there, anſwered he, no way, by which I can atone for madneſs? What I did, I am afraid, muſt have too plainly convinced you, that the violence of love had deprived me of my ſenſes. Indeed, my lord, ſays ſhe, it is in your power to give me a proof of an affection which I much rather wiſh to encourage, and to which I ſhould think myſelf more beholden. Name it, Madam, ſaid my lord, very warmly. — My lord, ſays ſhe, looking down upon her fan, I know you muſt be ſenſible how uneaſy this pretended paſſion of yours hath made me. — Can you be ſo cruel to call it pretended? ſays he. Yes, my lord, anſwered Sophia, all profeſſions of love to thoſe whom we perſecute, are moſt inſulting pretences. This purſuit of yours is to me a moſt cruel perſecution; nay, it is taking a moſt ungenerous advantage of my unhappy ſituation. Moſt lovely, moſt adorable charmer, do not accuſe me, cries he, of taking an ungenerous advantage, while I have no thoughts but what are directed to your honour and intereſt, and while I have no view, no hope, no ambition, but to throw myſelf, honour, fortune, every thing at your feet. My lord, ſays ſhe, it is that fortune, and thoſe honours, which give you the advantage of which I complain. Theſe are the charms which have ſeduced my relations, but to me

they are things indifferent. If your lordſhip will merit my gratitude, there is but one way. — Pardon me, divine creature, ſaid he, there can be none. All I can do for you is ſo much your due, and will give me ſo much pleaſure, that there is no room for your gratitude. — Indeed, my lord, anſwered ſhe, you may obtain my gratitude, my good opinion, every kind thought and wiſh which it is in my power to beſtow; nay, you may obtain them with eaſe; for ſure to a generous mind it muſt be eaſy to grant my requeſt. Let me beſeech you then, to ceaſe a purſuit, in which you can never have any ſucceſs. For your own ſake as well as mine, I entreat this favour: for ſure you are too noble to have any pleaſure in tormenting an unhappy creature. What can your lordſhip propoſe but uneaſineſs to yourſelf, by a perſeverance, which, upon my honour, upon my ſoul, cannot, ſhall not, prevail with me, whatever diſtreſſes you may drive me to? Here my lord fetched a deep ſigh, and then ſaid: — Is it then, Madam, that I am ſo unhappy to be the object of your diſlike and ſcorn; or will you pardon me if I ſuſpect there is ſome other? — Here he heſitated, and Sophia anſwered with ſome ſpirit: My lord, I ſhall not be accountable to you for the reaſons of my conduct. I am obliged to your lordſhip for the generous offer you have made; I own it is beyond either my deſerts or expectations; yet I hope, my lord, you will not inſiſt on my reaſons, when I declare I cannot accept

it. Lord Fellamar returned much to this, which we do not perfectly underſtand, and perhaps it could not all be ſtrictly reconciled either to ſenſe or grammar; but he concluded his ranting ſpeech with ſaying, that if ſhe had pre-engaged herſelf to any gentleman, however unhappy it would make him, he ſhould think himſelf bound in honour to deſiſt. Perhaps my lord laid too much emphaſis on the word gentleman; for we cannot elſe well account for the indignation with which he inſpired Sophia, who, in her anſwer, ſeemed greatly to reſent ſome affront he had given her.

While ſhe was ſpeaking, with her voice more raiſed than uſual, Mrs. Weſtern came into the room, the fire glaring in her cheeks, and the flames burſting from her eyes. I am aſhamed, ſays ſhe, my lord, of the reception which you have met with. I aſſure your lordſhip we are all ſenſible of the honour done us; and I muſt tell you, Miſs Weſtern, the family expect a different behaviour from you. Here my lord interfered on behalf of the young lady, but to no purpoſe; the aunt proceeded till Sophia pulled out her handkerchief, threw herſelf into a chair, and burſt into a violent fit of tears.

The remainder of the converſation between Mrs. Weſtern and his lordſhip, till the latter withdrew, conſiſted of bitter lamentations on his ſide, and on hers of the ſtrongeſt aſſurances that her niece ſhould and would conſent to all he wiſhed. Indeed, my

lord, ſays ſhe, the girl hath had a fooliſh education, neither adapted to her fortune nor her family. Her father, I am ſorry to ſay it, is to blame for every thing. The girl hath ſilly country notions of baſhfulneſs. Nothing elſe, my lord, upon my honour; I am convinced ſhe hath a good underſtanding at the bottom, and will be brought to reaſon.

This laſt ſpeech was made in the abſence of Sophia; for ſhe had ſome time before left the room, with more appearance of paſſion than ſhe had ever ſhewn on any occaſion; and now his lordſhip, after many expreſſions of thanks to Mrs. Weſtern, many ardent profeſſions of paſſion which nothing could conquer, and many aſſurances of perſeverance, which Mrs. Weſtern highly encouraged, took his leave for this time.

Before we relate what now paſſed between Mrs. Weſtern and Sophia, it may be proper to mention an unfortunate accident which had happened, and which had occaſioned the return of Mrs. Weſtern with ſo much fury, as we have ſeen.

The reader then muſt know, that the maid who at preſent attended on Sophia, was recommended by lady Bellaſton, with whom ſhe had lived for ſome time in the capacity of a comb-bruſh; ſhe was a very ſenſible girl, and had received the ſtricteſt inſtructions to watch her young lady very carefully. Theſe inſtructions, we are ſorry to ſay, were communicated to her by Mrs. Honour, into whoſe favour my lady

Bellaſton had now ſo ingratiated herſelf, that the violent affection which the good waiting-woman had formerly borne to Sophia, was entirely obliterated by that great attachment which ſhe had to her new miſtreſs.

Now when Mrs. Miller was departed, Betty, (for that was the name of the girl) returning to her young lady, found her very attentively engaged in reading a long letter, and the viſible emotions which ſhe betrayed on that occaſion, might have well accounted for ſome ſuſpicions which the girl entertained; but indeed they had yet a ſtronger foundation, for ſhe had overheard the whole ſcene which paſſed between Sophia and Mrs. Miller.

Mrs. Weſtern was acquainted with all this matter by Betty, who, after receiving many commendations, and ſome rewards, for her fidelity, was ordered, that if the woman who brought the letter, came again, ſhe ſhould introduce her to Mrs. Weſtern herſelf.

Unluckily Mrs. Miller returned at the very time when Sophia was engaged with his lordſhip. Betty, according to order, ſent her directly to the aunt; who being miſtreſs of ſo many circumſtances relating to what had paſſed the day before, eaſily impoſed upon the poor woman to believe that Sophia had communicated the whole affair; and ſo pumped every thing out of her which ſhe knew, relating to the letter, and relating to Jones.

This poor creature might indeed be called

ſimplicity itſelf. She was one of that order of mortals, who are apt to believe every thing which is ſaid to them: to whom nature hath neither indulged the offenſive nor defenſive weapons of deceit, and who are conſequently liable to be impoſed upon by any one, who will only be at the expence of a little falſhood for that purpoſe. Mrs. Weſtern having drained Mrs. Miller of all ſhe knew, which indeed was but little, but which was ſufficient to make the aunt ſuſpect a great deal, diſmiſſed her with aſſurances, that Sophia would not ſee her, that ſhe would ſend no anſwer to the letter, nor ever receive another; nor did ſhe ſuffer her to depart without a handſome lecture on the merits of an office, to which ſhe could afford no better name than that of procureſs. — This diſcovery had greatly diſcompoſed her temper, when coming into the apartment next to that in which the lovers were, ſhe overheard Sophia very warmly proteſting againſt his lordſhip's addreſſes. At which the rage already kindled, burſt forth, and ſhe ruſhed in upon her niece in a moſt furious manner, as we have already deſcribed, together with what paſt at that time till his lordſhip's departure.

No ſooner was lord Fellamar gone, than Mrs. Weſtern returned to Sophia, whom ſhe upbraided in the moſt bitter terms, for the ill uſe ſhe had made of the confidence repoſed in her; and for her treachery in converſing with a man with whom ſhe had offered

but the day before to bind herſelf in the moſt ſolemn oath, never more to have any converſation. Sophia proteſted, ſhe had maintained no ſuch converſation. How! How! Miſs Weſtern, ſaid the aunt, will you deny your receiving a letter from him yeſterday? A letter, Madam! anſwered Sophia ſomewhat ſurpriſed. It is not very well bred, Miſs, replies the aunt, to repeat my words. I ſay a letter, and inſiſt upon your ſhewing it me immediately. I ſcorn a lie, Madam, ſaid Sophia; I did receive a letter, but it was without my deſire, and indeed I may ſay againſt my conſent. Indeed, indeed, cries the aunt, you ought to be aſhamed of owning you had received it at all; but where is the letter? for I will ſee it.

To this peremptory demand, Sophia pauſed ſome time before ſhe returned an anſwer; and at laſt only excuſed herſelf by declaring, ſhe had not the letter in her pocket, which was indeed true; upon which her aunt loſing all manner of patience, aſked her niece this ſhort queſtion, whether ſhe would reſolve to marry lord Fellamar or no? to which ſhe received the ſtrongeſt negative. Mrs. Weſtern then replied with an oath, or ſomething very like one, that ſhe would early the next morning deliver her back into her father's hands.

Sophia then began to reaſon with her aunt in the following manner: Why, Madam, muſt I of neceſſity be forced to marry at all? Conſider how cruel you would have thought it in your own caſe, and how

much kinder your parents were in leaving you to your liberty. What have I done to forfeit this liberty? I will never marry contrary to my father's conſent, nor without aſking yours. — And when I aſk the conſent of either improperly, it will be then time enough to force ſome other marriage upon me. Can I bear to hear this, cries Mrs. Weſtern, from a girl who hath now a letter of a murderer in her pocket? I have no ſuch letter, I promiſe you, anſwered Sophia; and if he be a murderer, he will ſoon be in no condition to give you any further diſturbance. How, Miſs Weſtern, ſaid the aunt, have you the aſſurance to ſpeak of him in this manner, to own your affection for ſuch a villain to my face? Sure, Madam, ſaid Sophia, you put a very ſtrange conſtruction on my words. Indeed, Miſs Weſtern, cries the lady, I ſhall not bear this uſage; you have learnt of your father this manner of treating me; he hath taught you to give me the lie. He hath totally ruined you by his falſe ſyſtem of education; and pleaſe heaven he ſhall have the comfort of its fruits: for once more I declare to you, that to-morrow morning I will carry you back. I will withdraw all my forces from the field, and remain henceforth, like the wiſe king of Pruſſia, in a ſtate of perfect neutrality. You are both too wiſe to be regulated by my meaſures; ſo prepare yourſelf, for to-morrow morning you ſhall evacuate this houſe.

Sophia remonſtrated all ſhe could; but her aunt

was deaf to all ſhe ſaid. In this reſolution, therefore, we muſt at preſent leave her, as there ſeems to be no hopes of bringing her to change it.

CHAP. IX.

What happened to Mr. Jones in the priſon.

MR. Jones paſt above twenty-four melancholy hours by himſelf, unleſs when relieved by the company of Partridge, before Mr. Nightingale returned; not that this worthy young man had deſerted or forgot his friend, for indeed he had been much the greateſt part of the time employed in his ſervice.

He had heard upon enquiry that the only perſons who had ſeen the beginning of the unfortunate rencounter, were a crew belonging to a man of war, which then lay at Deptford. To Deptford, therefore, he went, in ſearch of this crew, where he was informed that the men he ſought after, were all gone aſhore. He then traced them from place to place, till at laſt he found two of them drinking together, with a third perſon, at a hedge-tavern, near Alderſgate.

Nightingale deſired to ſpeak with Jones by himſelf (for Partridge was in the room when he came in.) As ſoon as they were alone, Nightingale taking Jones by the hand, cried: Come, my brave friend, be not too much dejected at what I am going to tell you —

I am ſorry I am the meſſenger of bad news; but I think it my duty to tell you. I gueſs already what that bad news is, cries Jones. The poor gentleman then is dead. — I hope not, anſwered Nightingale. He was alive this morning; though I will not flatter you; I fear from the accounts I could get, that his wound is mortal. But if the affair be exactly as you told it, your own remorſe would be all you have reaſon to apprehend, let what would happen; but forgive me, my dear Tom, if I entreat you to make the worſt of your ſtory to your friends. If you diſguiſe any thing to us, you will only be an enemy to yourſelf.

What reaſon, my dear Jack, have I ever given you, ſaid Jones, to ſtab me with ſo cruel a ſuſpicion? Have patience, cries Nightingale, and I will tell you all. After the moſt diligent enquiry I could make, I at laſt met with two of the fellows who were preſent at this unhappy accident, and I am ſorry to ſay, they do not relate the ſtory ſo much in your favour as you yourſelf have told it. Why, what do they ſay? cries Jones. Indeed what I am ſorry to repeat, as I am afraid of the conſequence of it to you. They ſay that they were at too great a diſtance to overhear any words that paſſed between you; but they both agree that the firſt blow was given by you. Then upon my ſoul, anſwered Jones, they injure me. He not only ſtruck me firſt, but ſtruck me without the leaſt provocation. What ſhould induce thoſe villains to

accuſe me falſely? Nay, that I cannot gueſs, ſaid Nightingale; and if you yourſelf, and I who am ſo heartily your friend, cannot conceive a reaſon why they ſhould belie you, what reaſon will an indifferent court of juſtice be able to aſſign, why they ſhould not believe them? I repeated the queſtion to them ſeveral times, and ſo did another gentleman who was preſent, who, I believe, is a ſea-faring man, and who really acted a very friendly part by you; for he begged them often to conſider, that there was the life of a man in the caſe; and aſked them over and over, if they were certain? to which they both anſwered, that they were, and would abide by their evidence upon oath. For heaven's ſake, my dear friend, recollect yourſelf; for if this ſhould appear to be the fact, it will be your buſineſs to think in time of making the beſt of your intereſt. I would not ſhock you; but you know, I believe, the ſeverity of the law, whatever verbal provocations may have been given you. Alas! my friend, cries Jones, what intereſt hath ſuch a wretch as I? Beſides, do you think I would even wiſh to live with the reputation of a murderer? If I had any friends, (as, alas! I have none) could I have the confidence to ſolicit them to ſpeak in the behalf of a man condemned for the blackeſt crime in human nature? Believe me, I have no ſuch hope; but I have ſome reliance on a throne ſtill greatly ſuperior; which will, I am certain, afford me all the protection I merit.

He then concluded with many ſolemn and vehement proteſtations of the truth of what he had at firſt aſſerted.

The faith of Nightingale was now again ſtaggered, and began to incline to credit his friend, when Mrs. Miller appeared, and made a ſorrowful report of the ſucceſs of her embaſſy; which when Jones had heard, he cried out moſt heroically: Well, my friend, I am now indifferent as to what ſhall happen, at leaſt with regard to my life; and if it be the will of heaven that I ſhall make an atonement with that for the blood I have ſpilt, I hope the divine goodneſs will one day ſuffer my honour to be cleared, and that the words of a dying man at leaſt, will be believed, ſo far as to juſtify his character.

A very mournful ſcene now paſt between the priſoner and his friends, at which, as few readers would have been pleaſed to be preſent, ſo few, I believe, will deſire to hear it particularly related. We will, therefore, paſs on to the entrance of the turnkey, who acquainted Jones, that there was a lady without who deſired to ſpeak with him, when he was at leiſure.

Jones declared his ſurpriſe at this meſſage. He ſaid, he knew no lady in the world whom he could poſſibly expect to ſee there. However, as he ſaw no reaſon to decline ſeeing any perſon, Mrs. Miller and Mr. Nightingale preſently took their leave, and he gave orders to have the lady admitted.

If Jones was ſurpriſed at the news of a viſit from a lady, how greatly was he aſtoniſhed when he diſcovered this lady to be no other than Mrs. Waters! In this aſtoniſhment then we ſhall leave him a while, in order to cure the ſurpriſe of the reader, who will likewiſe, probably, not a little wonder at the arrival of this lady.

Who this Mrs. Waters was, the reader pretty well knows; what ſhe was, he muſt be perfectly ſatisfied. He will, therefore, be pleaſed to remember, that this lady departed from Upton in the ſame coach with Mr. Fitzpatrick and the other Iriſh gentleman, and in their company travelled to Bath.

Now there was a certain office in the gift of Mr. Fitzpatrick at that time vacant, namely, that of a wife; for the lady who had lately filled that office, had reſigned, or at leaſt deſerted her duty. Mr. Fitzpatrick having, therefore, thoroughly examined Mrs. Waters on the road, found her extremely fit for the place, which, on her arrival at Bath, he preſently conferred upon her, and ſhe, without any ſcruple, accepted. As huſband and wife this gentleman and lady continued together all the time they ſtayed at Bath, and as huſband and wife they arrived together in town.

Whether Mr. Fitzpatrick was ſo wiſe a man as not to part with one good thing till he had ſecured another, which he had at preſent only a proſpect of regaining; or whether Mrs. Waters had ſo well

diſcharged her office, that he intended ſtill to retain her as principal, and to make his wife (as is often the caſe) only her deputy, I will not ſay; but certain it is he never mentioned his wife to her, never communicated to her the letter given him by Mrs. Weſtern, nor ever once hinted his purpoſe of repoſſeſſing his wife; much leſs did he ever mention the name of Jones. For though he intended to fight with him wherever he met him, he did not imitate thoſe prudent perſons who think a wife, a mother, a ſiſter, or ſometimes a whole family, the ſafeſt ſeconds on theſe occaſions. The firſt account, therefore, which ſhe had of all this, was delivered to her from his lips, after he was brought home from the tavern where his wound had been dreſt.

As Mr. Fitzpatrick however had not the cleareſt way of telling a ſtory at any time, and was now, perhaps, a little more confuſed than uſual, it was ſome time before ſhe diſcovered, that the gentleman who had given him this wound was the very ſame perſon from whom her heart had received a wound, which, though not of a mortal kind, was yet ſo deep that it had left a conſiderable ſcar behind it. But no ſooner was ſhe acquainted that Mr. Jones himſelf was the man who had been committed to the Gate-houſe for this ſuppoſed murder, than ſhe took the firſt opportunity of committing Mr. Fitzpatrick to the care of his nurſe, and haſtened away to viſit the conqueror.

She now entered the room with an air of gaiety, which received an immediate check from the melancholy aſpect of poor Jones, who ſtarted and bleſſed himſelf when he ſaw her. Upon which ſhe ſaid: Nay, I do not wonder at your ſurpriſe; I believe you did not expect to ſee me; for few gentlemen are troubled here with viſits from any lady, unleſs a wife. You ſee the power you have over me, Mr. Jones. Indeed, I little thought, when we parted at Upton, that our next meeting would have been in ſuch a place. Indeed, Madam, ſays Jones, I muſt look upon this viſit as kind; few will follow the miſerable, eſpecially to ſuch diſmal habitations. I proteſt, Mr. Jones, ſays ſhe, I can hardly perſuade myſelf you are the ſame agreeable fellow I ſaw at Upton. Why, your face is more miſerable than any dungeon in the univerſe. What can be the matter with you? I thought, Madam, ſaid Jones, as you knew of my being here, you knew the unhappy reaſon. Pugh, ſays ſhe, you have pinked a man in a duel, that's all. Jones expreſt ſome indignation at this levity, and ſpoke with the utmoſt contrition for what had happened. To which ſhe anſwered: Well then, Sir, if you take it ſo much to heart, I will relieve you; the gentleman is not dead; and, I am pretty confident, is in no danger of dying. The ſurgeon indeed who firſt dreſſed him was a young fellow, and ſeemed deſirous of repreſenting his caſe to be as bad as poſſible, that he might have

the more honour from curing him; but the king's ſurgeon hath ſeen him ſince, and ſays, unleſs from a fever, of which there are at preſent no ſymptoms, he apprehends not the leaſt danger of life. Jones ſhewed great ſatisfaction in his countenance at this report; upon which ſhe affirmed the truth of it, adding: By the moſt extraordinary accident in the world, I lodge at the ſame houſe, and have ſeen the gentleman; and I promiſe you he doth you juſtice, and ſays, whatever be the conſequence, that he was entirely the aggreſſor, and that you was not in the leaſt to blame.

Jones expreſſed the utmoſt ſatisfaction at the account which Mrs. Waters brought him. He then informed her of many things which ſhe well knew before, as who Mr. Fitzpatrick was, the occaſion of his reſentment, &c. He likewiſe told her ſeveral facts of which ſhe was ignorant, as the adventure of the muff, and other particulars, concealing only the name of Sophia. He then lamented the follies and vices of which he had been guilty; every one of which, he ſaid, had been attended with ſuch ill conſequences, that he ſhould be unpardonable if he did not take warning, and quit thoſe vicious courſes for the future. He laſtly concluded with aſſuring her of his reſolution to ſin no more, leſt a worſe thing ſhould happen to him.

Mrs. Waters with great pleaſantry ridiculed all this, as the effects of low ſpirits and confinement.

She

She repeated ſome witticiſms about the devil when he was ſick, and told him, ſhe doubted not but ſhortly to ſee him at liberty, and as lively a fellow as ever; and then, ſays ſhe, I don't queſtion but your conſcience will be ſafely delivered of all theſe qualms that it is now ſo ſick in breeding.

Many more things of this kind ſhe uttered, ſome of which it would do her no great honour, in the opinion of ſome readers, to remember; nor are we quite certain but that the anſwers made by Jones would be treated with ridicule by others. We ſhall, therefore, ſuppreſs the reſt of this converſation, and only obſerve, that it ended at laſt with perfect innocence, and much more to the ſatisfaction of Jones than of the lady: for the former was greatly tranſported with the news ſhe had brought him; but the latter was not altogether ſo pleaſed with the penitential behaviour of a man, whom ſhe had at her firſt interview conceived a very different opinion of from what ſhe now entertained of him.

Thus the melancholy occaſioned by the report of Mr. Nightingale was pretty well effaced; but the dejection into which Mrs. Miller had thrown him ſtill continued. The account ſhe gave, ſo well tallied with the words of Sophia herſelf in her letter, that he made not the leaſt doubt but that ſhe had diſcloſed his letter to her aunt, and had taken a fixed reſolution to abandon him. The torments this thought gave

him, were to be equalled only by a piece of news which fortune had yet in ſtore for him, and which we ſhall communicate in the ſecond chapter of the enſuing book.

THE HISTORY OF A FOUNDLING.

BOOK XVIII.

Containing about ſix days.

CHAP. I.

A farewell to the reader.

WE are now, reader, arrived at the laſt ſtage of our long journey. As we have, therefore, travelled together through ſo many pages, let us behave to one another like fellow travellers in a ſtage-coach, who have paſſed ſeveral days in the company of each other; and who, notwithſtanding any bickerings or little animoſities which may have occurred on the road, generally make all up at laſt, and mount, for the laſt time, into their vehicle with chearfulneſs and good-humour; ſince after this one ſtage, it may poſſibly happen to us, at it commonly happens to them, never to meet more.

As I have here taken up this ſimile, give me leave to carry it a little farther. I intend then in this laſt book to imitate the good company I have mentioned in their laſt journey. Now, it is well known, that all jokes and raillery are at this time laid aſide; whatever characters any of the paſſengers have for the jeſt-ſake perſonated on the road, are now thrown off, and the converſation is uſually plain and ſerious.

In the ſame manner, if I have now and then, in the courſe of this work, indulged any pleaſantry for thy entertainment, I ſhall here lay it down. The variety of matter, indeed, which I ſhall be obliged to cram into this book, will afford no room for any of thoſe ludicrous obſervations which I have elſewhere made, and which may ſometimes, perhaps, have prevented thee from taking a nap when it was beginning to ſteal upon thee. In this laſt book thou wilt find nothing (or at moſt very little) of that nature. All will be plain narrative only; and, indeed, when thou haſt peruſed the many great events which this book will produce, thou wilt think the number of pages contained in it, ſcarce ſufficient to tell the ſtory.

And now, my friend, I take this opportunity (as I ſhall have no other) of heartily wiſhing thee well. If I have been an entertaining companion to thee, I promiſe thee it is what I have deſired. If in any thing I have offended, it was really without

any intention. Some things perhaps here ſaid may have hit thee or thy friends; but I do moſt ſolemnly declare they were not pointed at thee or them. I queſtion not but thou haſt been told, among other ſtories of me, that thou waſt to travel with a very ſcurrilous fellow: but whoever told thee ſo, did me an injury. No man deteſts and deſpiſes ſcurrility more than myſelf; nor hath any man more reaſon; for none hath ever been treated with more: and what is a very ſevere fate, I have had ſome of the abuſive writings of thoſe very men fathered upon me, who in other of their works have abuſed me themſelves with the utmoſt virulence.

All theſe works, however, I am well convinced, will be dead long before this page ſhall offer itſelf to thy peruſal: for however ſhort the period may be of my own performances, they will moſt probably outlive their own infirm author, and the weekly productions of his abuſive cotemporaries.

CHAP. II.

Containing a very tragical incident.

WHILE Jones was employed in thoſe unpleaſant meditations, with which we left him tormenting himſelf, Partridge came ſtumbling into the room with his face paler than aſhes, his eyes fixed in his head, his hair ſtanding an end, and every limb trembling. In ſhort, he looked as he would have done had he ſeen a ſpectre, or had he indeed been a ſpectre himſelf.

Jones, who was little ſubject to fear, could not avoid being ſomewhat ſhocked at this ſudden appearance. He did indeed himſelf change colour, and his voice a little faultered, while he aſked him what was the matter.

I hope, Sir, ſaid Partridge, you will not be angry with me. Indeed I did not liſten, but I was obliged to ſtay in the outward room. I am ſure I wiſh I had been a hundred miles off, rather than have heard what I have heard. Why what is the matter? ſaid Jones. The matter, Sir? O good heaven! anſwered Partridge, was that woman who is juſt gone out, the woman who was with you at Upton? She was, Partridge, cries Jones. And did you really, Sir, go to bed with that woman? ſaid he trembling. —I am

afraid what paſt between us is no ſecret, ſaid Jones. — Nay, but pray, Sir, for heaven's ſake, Sir, anſwer me, cries Partridge. You know I did, cries Jones. Why then the lord have mercy upon your ſoul, and forgive you, cries Partridge; but as ſure as I ſtand here alive, you have been a-bed with your own mother.

Upon theſe words, Jones became in a moment a greater picture of horror than Partridge himſelf. He was indeed, for ſome time, ſtruck dumb with amazement, and both ſtood ſtaring wildly at each other. — At laſt his words found way, and in an interrupted voice he ſaid: — How! How! What's this you tell me? Nay, Sir, cries Partridge, I have not breath enough to tell you now — but what I have ſaid is moſt certainly true. — That woman who now went out, is your own mother. How unlucky was it for you, that I did not happen to ſee her at that time, to have prevented it! Sure the devil himſelf muſt have contrived to bring about this wickedneſs.

Sure, cries Jones, fortune will never have done with me, till ſhe hath driven me to diſtraction. But why do I blame fortune? I am myſelf the cauſe of all my miſery. All the dreadful miſchiefs which have befallen me, are the conſequences only of my own folly and vice. What thou haſt told me, Partridge, hath almoſt deprived me of my ſenſes. And was Mrs. Waters then — But why do I aſk? For thou muſt certainly know her. — If thou haſt any affection

for me; nay, if thou haſt any pity, let me beſeech thee to fetch this miſerable woman back again to me. O good heavens! Inceſt—with a mother! To what am I reſerved? He then fell into the moſt violent and frantic agonies of grief and deſpair, in which Partridge declared he would not leave him: but at laſt having vented the firſt torrent of paſſion, he came a little to himſelf; and then having acquainted Partridge that he would find this wretched woman in the ſame houſe where the wounded gentleman was lodged, he diſpatched him in queſt of her.

If the reader will pleaſe to refreſh his memory, by turning to the ſcene at Upton, in the ninth book, he will be apt to admire the many ſtrange accidents which unfortunately prevented any interview between Partridge and Mrs. Waters, when ſhe ſpent a whole day there with Mr. Jones. Inſtances of this kind we may frequently obſerve in life, where the greateſt events are produced by a nice train of little circumſtances; and more than one example of this may be diſcovered by the accurate eye, in this our hiſtory.

After a fruitleſs ſearch of two or three hours, Partridge returned back to his maſter, without having ſeen Mrs. Waters. Jones, who was in a ſtate of deſperation at his delay, was almoſt raving mad when he brought him this account. He was not long however in this condition, before he received the following letter.

SIR,

Since I left you, I have seen a gentleman, from whom I have learnt something concerning you, which greatly surprizes and affects me; but as I have not at present leisure to communicate a matter of such high importance, you must suspend your curiosity till our next meeting, which shall be the first moment I am able to see you. O Mr. Jones, little did I think, when I past that happy day at Upton, the reflection upon which is like to embitter all my future life, who it was to whom I owed such perfect happiness. Believe me to be ever sincerely your unfortunate

J. WATERS.

P. S. I would have you comfort yourself as much as possible; for Mr. Fitzpatrick is in no manner of danger; so that whatever other grievous crimes you may have to repent of, the guilt of blood is not among the number.

Jones having received the letter, let it drop (for he was unable to hold it, and indeed had scarce the use of any one of his faculties). Partridge took it up, and having received consent by silence, read it likewise; nor had it upon him a less sensible effect. The pencil, and not the pen, should describe

the horrors which appeared in both their countenances. While they both remained ſpeechleſs, the turnkey entered the room, and without taking any notice of what ſufficiently diſcovered itſelf in the faces of them both, acquainted Jones, that a man without deſired to ſpeak with him. This perſon was preſently introduced, and was no other than Black George.

As ſights of horror were not ſo uſual to George as they were to the turnkey, he inſtantly ſaw the great diſorder which appeared in the face of Jones. This he imputed to the accident that had happened, which was reported in the very worſt light in Mr. Weſtern's family; he concluded, therefore, that the gentleman was dead, and that Mr. Jones was in a fair way of coming to a ſhameful end. A thought which gave him much uneaſineſs; for George was of a compaſſionate diſpoſition, and notwithſtanding a ſmall breach of friendſhip, which he had been over-tempted to commit, was, in the main, not inſenſible of the obligations he had formerly received from Mr. Jones.

The poor fellow, therefore, ſcarce refrained from a tear at the preſent ſight. He told Jones, he was heartily ſorry for his misfortunes, and begged him to conſider, if he could be of any manner of ſervice. Perhaps, Sir, ſaid he, you may want a little matter of money upon this occaſion; if you do, Sir, what little I have is heartily at your ſervice.

Jones ſhook him very heartily by the hand, and gave him many thanks for the kind offer he had made; but anſwered, he had not the leaſt want of that kind. Upon which George began to preſs his ſervices more eagerly than before. Jones again thanked him, with aſſurances that he wanted nothing which was in the power of any man living to give. Come, come, my good maſter, anſwered George, do not take the matter ſo much to heart. Things may end better than you imagine; to be ſure you an't the firſt gentleman who hath killed a man, and yet come off. You are wide of the matter, George, ſaid Partridge, the gentleman is not dead, nor like to die. Don't diſturb my maſter, at preſent, for he is troubled about a matter in which it is not in your power to do him any good. You don't know what I may be able to do, Mr. Partridge, anſwered George; if his concern is about my young lady, I have ſome news to tell my maſter. — What do you ſay, Mr. George? cried Jones. Hath any thing lately happened in which my Sophia is concerned? My Sophia! How dares ſuch a wretch as I, mention her ſo prophanely! — I hope ſhe will be yours yet, anſwered George. — Why, yes, Sir, I have ſomething to tell you about her. Madam Weſtern hath juſt brought Madam Sophia home, and there hath been a terrible to do. I could not poſſibly learn the very right of it; but my maſter he hath been in a vaſt big paſſion, and ſo was Madam Weſtern, and I heard her ſay as ſhe

went out of doors into her chair, that ſhe would never ſet her foot in maſter's houſe again. I don't know what's the matter, not I, but every thing was very quiet when I came out; but Robin, who waited at ſupper, ſaid he had never ſeen the 'ſquire for a long while in ſuch good humour with young Madam; that he kiſſed her ſeveral times, and ſwore ſhe ſhould be her own miſtreſs, and he never would think of confining her any more. I thought this news would pleaſe you, and ſo I ſlipped out, though it was ſo late, to inform you of it. Mr. Jones aſſured George, that it did greatly pleaſe him; for though he ſhould never more preſume to lift his eyes towards that incomparable creature, nothing could ſo much relieve his miſery as the ſatisfaction he ſhould always have, in hearing of her welfare.

The reſt of the converſation which paſſed at the viſit, is not important enough to be here related. The reader will, therefore, forgive us this abrupt breaking off, and be pleaſed to hear how this great goodwill of the 'ſquire towards his daughter was brought about.

Mrs. Weſtern, on her firſt arrival at her brother's lodging, began to ſet forth the great honours and advantages which would accrue to the family by the match with lord Fellamar, which her niece had abſolutely refuſed; in which refuſal, when the 'ſquire took the part of his daughter, ſhe fell immediately into the moſt violent paſſion, and ſo irritated and

provoked the 'ſquire, that neither his patience nor his prudence could bear it any longer; upon which there enſued between them both ſo warm a bout at altercation, that perhaps the regions of Billingſgate never equalled it. In the heat of this ſcolding, Mrs. Weſtern departed, and had conſequently no leiſure to acquaint her brother with the letter which Sophia received, which might have poſſibly produced ill effects; but to ſay truth, I believe it never once occurred to her memory at this time.

When Mrs. Weſtern was gone, Sophia, who had been hitherto ſilent, as well indeed from neceſſity as inclination, began to return the compliment which her father had made her, in taking her part againſt her aunt, by taking his likewiſe againſt the lady. This was the firſt time of her ſo doing, and it was in the higheſt degree acceptable to the 'ſquire. Again he remembered that Mr. Allworthy had inſiſted on an entire relinquiſhment of all violent means; and indeed, as he made no doubt but that Jones would be hanged, he did not in the leaſt queſtion ſucceeding with his daughter by fair means; he now, therefore, once more gave a looſe to his natural fondneſs for her, which had ſuch an effect on the dutiful, grateful, tender and affectionate heart of Sophia, that had her honour given to Jones, and ſomething elſe perhaps in which he was concerned, been removed, I much doubt whether ſhe would not have ſacrificed herſelf to a man ſhe did not like, to have obliged her father.

She promiſed him, ſhe would make it the whole buſineſs of her life to oblige him, and would never marry any man againſt his conſent; which brought the old man ſo near to his higheſt happineſs, that he was reſolved to take the other ſup, and went to bed completely drunk.

CHAP. III.

Allworthy viſits old Nightingale; with a ſtrange diſcovery that he made on that occaſion.

THE morning after theſe things had happened, Mr. Allworthy went, according to his promiſe, to viſit old Nightingale, with whom his authority was ſo great, that after having ſat with him three hours, he at laſt prevailed with him to conſent to ſee his ſon.

Here an accident happened of a very extraordinary kind; one indeed of thoſe ſtrange chances, whence very good and grave men have concluded that providence often interpoſes in the diſcovery of the moſt ſecret villainy, in order to caution men from quitting the paths of honeſty, however warily they tread in thoſe of vice.

Allworthy, at his entrance into Mr. Nightingale's, ſaw Black George; he took no notice of him, nor did Black George imagine he had perceived him. However, when their converſation on the principal

point was over, Allworthy aſked Nightingale, whether he knew one George Seagrim, and upon what buſineſs he came to his houſe? Yes, anſwered Nightingale, I know him very well, and a moſt extraordinary fellow he is, who, in theſe days, hath been able to hoard up 500 l. from renting a very ſmall eſtate of 30 l. a year. And is this the ſtory which he hath told you? cries Allworthy. Nay, it is true, I promiſe you, ſaid Nightingale, for I have the money now in my own hands, in five bank bills, which I am to lay out either in a mortgage, or in ſome purchaſe in the north of England. The bank bills were no ſooner produced at Allworthy's deſire, than he bleſſed himſelf at the ſtrangeneſs of the diſcovery. He preſently told Nightingale, that theſe bank bills were formerly his, and then acquainted him with the whole affair. As there are no men who complain more of the frauds of buſineſs than highwaymen, gameſters, and other thieves of that kind; ſo there are none who ſo bitterly exclaim againſt the frauds of gameſters, &c. as uſurers, brokers, and other thieves of this kind; whether it be, that the one way of cheating is a diſcountenance or reflection upon the other, or that money, which is the common miſtreſs of all cheats, makes them regard each other in the light of rivals; but Nightingale no ſooner heard the ſtory, than he exclaimed againſt the fellow in terms much ſeverer than the juſtice and honeſty of Allworthy had beſtowed on him.

Allworthy desired Nightingale to retain both the money and the secret till he should hear farther from him; and if he should in the mean time see the fellow, that he would not take the least notice to him of the discovery which he had made. He then returned to his lodgings, where he found Mrs. Miller in a very dejected condition, on account of the information she had received from her son-in-law. Mr. Allworthy, with great chearfulness, told her, that he had much good news to communicate; and with little further preface acquainted her, that he had brought Mr. Nightingale to consent to see his son, and did not in the least doubt to effect a perfect reconciliation between them; though he found the father more soured by another accident of the same kind, which had happened in his family. He then mentioned the running away of the uncle's daughter, which he had been told by the old gentleman, and which Mrs. Miller, and her son-in-law, did not yet know.

The reader may suppose Mrs. Miller received this account with great thankfulness, and no less pleasure; but so uncommon was her friendship to Jones, that I am not certain whether the uneasiness she suffered for his sake, did not over-balance her satisfaction at hearing a piece of news, tending so much to the happiness of her own family; nor whether even this very news, as it reminded her of the obligations she had to Jones, did not hurt as well as please her;

when

when her grateful heart ſaid to her: While my own family is happy, how miſerable is the poor creature, to whoſe generoſity we owe the beginning of all this happineſs!

Allworthy having left her a little while to chew the cud (if I may uſe that expreſſion) on theſe firſt tidings, told her, he had ſtill ſomething more to impart, which he believed would give her pleaſure. I think, ſaid he, I have diſcovered a pretty conſiderable treaſure belonging to the young gentleman, your friend; but perhaps, indeed, his preſent ſituation may be ſuch, that it will be of no ſervice to him. The latter part of the ſpeech gave Mrs. Miller to underſtand who was meant, and ſhe anſwered with a ſigh: I hope not, Sir. I hope ſo too, cries Allworthy, with all my heart; but my nephew told me this morning, he had heard a very bad account of the affair. — Good heaven! Sir, ſaid ſhe. — Well, I muſt not ſpeak, and yet it is certainly very hard to be obliged to hold one's tongue when one hears — Madam, ſaid Allworthy, you may ſay whatever you pleaſe; you know me too well to think I have a prejudice againſt any one; and as for that young man, I aſſure you I ſhould be heartily pleaſed to find he could acquit himſelf of every thing, and particularly of this ſad affair. You can teſtify the affection I have formerly borne him. The world, I know, cenſured me for loving him ſo much. I did not withdraw that affection from him without thinking I had the

juſteſt cauſe. Believe me, Mrs. Miller, I ſhould be glad to find I have been miſtaken. Mrs. Miller was going eagerly to reply, when a ſervant acquainted her, that a gentleman without deſired to ſpeak with her immediately. Allworthy then enquired for his nephew, and was told, that he had been for ſome time in his room with the gentleman who uſed to come to him, and whom Mr. Allworthy gueſſing rightly to be Mr. Dowling, he deſired preſently to ſpeak with him.

When Dowling attended, Allworthy put the caſe of the bank notes to him, without mentioning any name, and aſked, in what manner ſuch a perſon might be puniſhed. To which Dowling anſwered, he thought he might be indicted on the Black Act; but ſaid, as it was a matter of ſome nicety, it would be proper to go to council. He ſaid, he was to attend council preſently upon an affair of Mr. Weſtern's, and if Mr. Allworthy pleaſed, he would lay the caſe before them. This was agreed to; and then Mrs. Miller opening the door, cried: I aſk pardon, I did not know you had company; but Allworthy deſired her to come in, ſaying, he had finiſhed his buſineſs. Upon which Mr. Dowling withdrew, and Mrs. Miller introduced Mr. Nightingale the younger, to return thanks for the great kindneſs done him by Allworthy; but ſhe had ſcarce patience to let the young gentleman finiſh his ſpeech before ſhe interrupted him, ſaying: O Sir, Mr. Nightingale brings great news about

poor Mr. Jones; he hath been to ſee the wounded gentleman, who is out of all danger of death, and, what is more, declares he fell upon poor Mr. Jones himſelf, and beat him. I am ſure, Sir, you would not have Mr. Jones be a coward. If I was a man myſelf, I am ſure if any man was to ſtrike me, I ſhould draw my ſword. Do pray, my dear, tell Mr. Allworthy, tell him all yourſelf. Nightingale then confirmed what Mrs. Miller had ſaid; and concluded with many handſome things of Jones, who was, he ſaid, one of the beſt-natured fellows in the world, and not in the leaſt inclined to be quarrelſome. Here Nightingale was going to ceaſe, when Mrs. Miller again begged him to relate all the many dutiful expreſſions he had heard him make uſe of towards Mr. Allworthy. To ſay the utmoſt good of Mr. Allworthy, cries Nightingale, is doing no more than ſtrict juſtice, and can have no merit in it; but indeed I muſt ſay, no man can be more ſenſible of the obligations he hath to ſo good a man, than is poor Jones. Indeed, Sir, I am convinced the weight of your diſpleaſure is the heavieſt burden he lies under. He hath often lamented it to me, and hath as often proteſted in the moſt ſolemn manner he hath never been intentionally guilty of any offence towards you; nay, he hath ſworn he would rather die a thouſand deaths, than he would have his conſcience upbraid him with one direſpectful, ungrateful, or undutiful thought towards you. But I aſk pardon, Sir, I am afraid

I preſume to intermeddle too far in ſo tender a point. You have ſpoke no more than what a chriſtian ought, cries Mrs. Miller. Indeed, Mr. Nightingale, anſwered Mr. Allworthy, I applaud your generous friendſhip, and I wiſh he may merit it of you. I confeſs I am glad to hear the report you bring from this unfortunate gentleman; and if that matter ſhould turn out to be as you repreſent it, (and indeed I doubt nothing of what you ſay) I may perhaps, in time, be brought to think better than lately I have of this young man: for this good gentlewoman here, nay all who know me, can witneſs that I loved him as dearly as if he had been my own ſon. Indeed I have conſidered him as a child ſent by fortune to my care. I ſtill remember the innocent, the helpleſs ſituation in which I found him. I feel the tender preſſure of his little hands at this moment. —He was my darling, indeed he was. At which words he ceaſed, and the tears ſtood in his eyes.

As the anſwer which Mrs. Miller made may lead us into freſh matters, we will here ſtop to account for the viſible alteration in Mr. Allworthy's mind, and the abatement of his anger to Jones. Revolutions of this kind, it is true, do frequently occur in hiſtories and dramatic writers, for no other reaſon than becauſe the hiſtory or play draws to a concluſion, and are juſtified by authority of authors; yet though we inſiſt upon as much authority as any author whatever, we ſhall uſe this power very ſparingly,

and never but when we are driven to it by neceſſity, which we do not at preſent foreſee will happen in this work.

This alteration then in the mind of Mr. Allworthy, was occaſioned by a letter he had juſt received from Mr. Square, and which we ſhall give the reader in the beginning of the next chapter.

CHAP. IV.

Containing two letters in very different ſtiles.

My worthy friend,

I Informed you in my laſt, that I was forbidden the uſe of the waters, as they were found by experience rather to increaſe than leſſen the ſymptoms of my diſtemper. I muſt now acquaint you with a piece of news, which, I believe, will afflict my friends more than it hath afflicted me. Dr. Harrington and Dr. Brewſter have informed me, that there is no hopes of my recovery.

I have ſomewhere read, that the great uſe of philoſophy is to learn to die. I will not, therefore, ſo far diſgrace mine, as to ſhew any ſurpriſe at receiving a leſſon which I muſt be thought to have ſo long ſtudied. Yet, to ſay the truth, one page of the goſpel teaches this leſſon better than all the

volumes of antient or modern philoſophers. The aſſurance it gives us of another life is a much ſtronger ſupport to a good mind, than all the conſolations that are drawn from the neceſſity of nature, the emptineſs or ſatiety of our enjoyments here, or any topic of thoſe declamations which are ſometimes capable of arming our minds with a ſtubborn patience in bearing the thoughts of death; but never of raiſing them to a real contempt of it, and much leſs of making us think it is a real good. I would not here be underſtood to throw the horrid cenſure of atheiſm, or even the abſolute denial of immortality, on all who are called philoſophers. Many of that ſect, as well antient as modern, have, from the light of reaſon, diſcovered ſome hopes of a future ſtate; but, in reality, that light was ſo faint and glimmering, and the hopes were ſo uncertain and precarious, that it may be juſtly doubted on which ſide their belief turned. Plato himſelf concludes his Phædon with declaring, that his beſt arguments amount only to raiſe a probability; and Cicero himſelf ſeems rather to profeſs an inclination to believe, than any actual belief in the doctrines of immortality. As to myſelf, to be very ſincere with you, I never was much in earneſt in this faith, till I was in earneſt a chriſtian.

You will perhaps wonder at the latter expreſſion; but I aſſure you it hath not been till very lately, that I could, with truth, call myſelf ſo. The pride of philoſophy had intoxicated my reaſon, and the

ſublimeſt of all wiſdom appeared to me, as it did to the Greeks of old, to be fooliſhneſs. God hath however been ſo gracious to ſhew me my error in time, and to bring me into the way of truth, before I ſunk into utter darkneſs for ever.

I find myſelf beginning to grow weak. I ſhall, therefore, haſten to the main purpoſe of this letter.

When I reflect on the actions of my paſt life, I know of nothing which ſits heavier upon my conſcience, than the injuſtice I have been guilty of to that poor wretch, your adopted ſon. I have indeed not only connived at the villainy of others, but been myſelf active in injuſtice towards him. Believe me, my dear friend, when I tell you, on the word of a dying man, he hath been baſely injured. As to the principal fact, upon the miſrepreſentation of which you diſcarded him, I ſolemnly aſſure you he is innocent. When you lay upon your ſuppoſed death-bed, he was the only perſon in the houſe who teſtified any real concern; and what happened afterwards aroſe from the wildneſs of his joy on your recovery; and, I am ſorry to ſay it, from the baſeneſs of another perſon (but it is my deſire to juſtify the innocent, and to accuſe none.) Believe me, my friend, this young man hath the nobleſt generoſity of heart, the moſt perfect capacity for friendſhip, the higheſt integrity, and indeed every virtue which can ennoble a man. He hath ſome faults, but among them is not to be numbered the leaſt want

of duty or gratitude towards you. On the contrary, I am ſatisfied, when you diſmiſſed him from your houſe, his heart bled for you more than for himſelf.

Worldly motives were the wicked and baſe reaſons of my concealing this from you ſo long; to reveal it now, I can have no inducement but the deſire of ſerving the cauſe of truth, of doing right to the innocent, and of making all the amends in my power for a paſt offence. I hope this declaration, therefore, will have the effect deſired, and will reſtore this deſerving young man to your favour; the hearing of which, while I am yet alive, will afford the utmoſt conſolation to,

SIR,

Your moſt obliged,

Obedient humble ſervant,

THOMAS SQUARE.

The reader will, after this, ſcarce wonder at the revolution ſo viſibly appearing in Mr. Allworthy, notwithſtanding he received from Thwackum, by the ſame poſt, another letter of a very different kind, which we ſhall here add, as it may poſſibly be the laſt time we ſhall have occaſion to mention the name of that gentleman.

SIR,

I am not at all ſurpriſed at hearing from your worthy nephew a freſh inſtance of the villainy of Mr. Square the atheiſt's young pupil. I ſhall not wonder at any murders he may commit; and I heartily pray that your own blood may not ſeal up his final commitment to the place of wailing and gnaſhing of teeth.

Though you cannot want ſufficient calls to repentance for the many unwarrantable weakneſſes exemplified in your behaviour to this wretch, ſo much to the prejudice of your own lawful family, and of your character; I ſay, though theſe may ſufficiently be ſuppoſed to prick and goad your conſcience at this ſeaſon; I ſhould yet be wanting to my duty, if I ſpared to give you ſome admonition, in order to bring you to a due ſenſe of your errors. I, therefore, pray you ſeriouſly to conſider the judgment which is likely to over-take this wicked villain; and let it ſerve at leaſt as a warning to you, that you may not for the future deſpiſe the advice of one who is ſo indefatigable in his prayers for your welfare.

Had not my hand been with-held from due correction, I had ſcourged much of this diabolical ſpirit out of a boy, of whom, from his infancy, I diſcovered the devil had taken ſuch entire poſſeſſion; but reflections of this kind now come too late.

I am ſorry you have given away the living of Weſterton ſo haſtily. I ſhould have applied on that occaſion earlier, had I thought you would not have acquainted me previous to the diſpoſition. — Your objection to pluralities, is being righteous over-much. If there were any crime in the practice, ſo many godly men would not agree to it. If the vicar of Aldergrove ſhould die (as we hear he is in a declining way) I hope you will think of me, ſince I am certain you muſt be convinced of my moſt ſincere attachment to your higheſt welfare. A welfare to which all worldly conſiderations are as trifling as the ſmall tithes mentioned in ſcripture are, when compared to the weighty matters of the law.

I am, SIR,

Your faithful humble ſervant,

ROGER THWACKUM.

This was the firſt time Thwackum ever wrote in this authoritative ſtile to Allworthy, and of this he had afterwards ſufficient reaſon to repent, as is the caſe of thoſe who miſtake the higheſt degree of goodneſs for the loweſt degree of weakneſs. Allworthy had indeed never liked this man. He knew him to be proud and ill-natured; he alſo knew that his divinity itſelf was tinctured with his

temper, and ſuch as in many reſpects he himſelf did by no means approve: but he was at the ſame time an excellent ſcholar, and moſt indefatigable in teaching the two lads. Add to this the ſtrict ſeverity of his life and manners, an unimpeached honeſty, and a moſt devout attachment to religion. So that upon the whole, though Allworthy did not eſteem nor love the man, yet he could never bring himſelf to part with a tutor to the boys, who was, both by learning and induſtry, extremely well qualified for his office; and he hoped, that as they were bred up in his own houſe, and under his own eyes, he ſhould be able to correct whatever was wrong in Thwackum's inſtructions.

CHAP. V.

In which the hiſtory is continued.

MR. Allworthy, in his laſt ſpeech, had recollected ſome tender ideas concerning Jones, which had brought tears into the good man's eyes. This Mrs. Miller obſerving, ſaid: Yes, yes, Sir, your goodneſs to this poor young man is known, notwithſtanding all your care to conceal it; but there is not a ſingle ſyllable of truth in what thoſe villains ſaid. Mr. Nightingale hath now diſcovered the whole matter. It ſeems theſe fellows were employed by a lord,

who is a rival of poor Mr. Jones, to have preſſed him on board a ſhip. — I aſſure them I don't know who they will preſs next. Mr. Nightingale here hath ſeen the officer himſelf, who is a very pretty gentleman, and hath told him all, and is very ſorry for what he undertook, which he would never have done, had he known Mr. Jones to have been a gentleman; but he was told that he was a common ſtrolling vagabond.

Allworthy ſtared at tallhis, and declared, he was a ſtranger to every word ſhe ſaid. Yes, Sir, anſwered ſhe, I believe you are. — It is a very different ſtory, I believe, from what thoſe fellows told the lawyer.

What lawyer, Madam? What is it you mean? ſaid Allworthy. Nay, nay, ſaid ſhe, this is ſo like you to deny your own goodneſs; but Mr. Nightingale here ſaw him. Saw whom, Madam? anſwered he. Why your lawyer, Sir, ſaid ſhe, that you ſo kindly ſent to enquire into the affair. I am ſtill in the dark, upon my honour, ſaid Allworthy. Why then do you tell him, my dear Sir, cried ſhe. Indeed, Sir, ſaid Nightingale, I did ſee that very lawyer, who went from you when I came into the room, at an alehouſe at Alderſgate, in company with two of the fellows who were employed by lord Fellamar to preſs Mr. Jones, and who were by that means preſent at the unhappy rencounter between him and Mr. Fitzpatrick. I own, Sir, ſaid Mrs. Miller, when I ſaw this gentleman come into the room to you,

I told Mr. Nightingale that I apprehended you had ſent him thither to inquire into the affair. Allworthy ſhewed marks of aſtoniſhment in his countenance at this news, and was indeed for two or three minutes ſtruck dumb by it. At laſt, addreſſing himſelf to Mr. Nightingale, he ſaid: I muſt confeſs myſelf, Sir, more ſurpriſed at what you tell me, than I have ever been before at any thing in my whole life. Are you certain this was the gentleman? I am moſt certain, anſwered Nightingale. At Alderſgate? cries Allworthy. And was you in company with this lawyer and the two fellows? — I was, Sir, ſaid the other, very near half an hour. — Well, Sir, ſaid Allworthy, and in what manner did the lawyer behave? Did you hear all that paſt between him and the fellows? — No, Sir, anſwered Nightingale, they had been together before I came. In my preſence the lawyer ſaid little; but after I had ſeveral times examined the fellows, who perſiſted in a ſtory directly contrary to what I have heard from Mr. Jones, and which I find by Mr. Fitzpatrick was a rank falſhood; the lawyer then deſired the fellows to ſay nothing but what was the truth, and ſeemed to ſpeak ſo much in favour of Mr. Jones, that when I ſaw the ſame perſon with you, I concluded your goodneſs had prompted you to ſend him thither. — And did you not ſend him thither? ſays Mrs. Miller. — Indeed I did not, anſwered Allworthy: nor did I know he had gone on ſuch an errand till

this moment. — I ſee it all! ſaid Mrs. Miller: upon my ſoul, I ſee it all! No wonder they have been cloſetted ſo cloſe lately. Son Nightingale, let me beg you run for theſe fellows immediately — find them out if they are above ground. I will go myſelf. — Dear Madam, ſaid Allworthy, be patient, and do me the favour to ſend a ſervant up ſtairs to call Mr. Dowling hither, if he be in the houſe, or if not, Mr. Blifil. Mrs. Miller went out muttering ſomething to herſelf, and preſently returned with an anſwer, that Mr. Dowling was gone; but that the t'other, as ſhe called him, was coming.

Allworthy was of a cooler diſpoſition than the good woman, whoſe ſpirits were all up in arms in the cauſe of her friend. He was not, however, without ſome ſuſpicions which were near a-kin to hers. When Blifil came into the room, he aſked him with a very ſerious countenance, and with a leſs friendly look than he had ever before given him, whether he knew any thing of Mr. Dowling's having ſeen any of the perſons who were preſent at the duel between Jones and another gentleman?

There is nothing ſo dangerous as a queſtion which comes by ſurpriſe on a man, whoſe buſineſs it is to conceal truth, or to defend falſhood. For which reaſon thoſe worthy perſonages, whoſe noble office it is to ſave the lives of their fellow creatures at the Old-Bailey, take the utmoſt care, by frequent previous examinations, to divine every queſtion,

which may be aſked their clients on the day of trial, that they may be ſupplied with proper and ready anſwers, which the moſt fertile invention cannot ſupply in an inſtant. Beſides, the ſudden and violent impulſes on the blood, occaſioned by thoſe ſurpriſes, cauſe frequently ſuch an alteration in the countenance, that the man is obliged to give evidence againſt himſelf. And ſuch indeed were the alterations which the countenance of Blifil underwent from this ſudden queſtion, that we can ſcarce blame the eagerneſs of Mrs. Miller, who immediately cry'd out: Guilty, upon my honour! guilty, upon my ſoul!

Mr. Allworthy ſharply rebuked her for this impetuoſity; and then turning to Blifil, who ſeemed ſinking into the earth, he ſaid: Why do you heſitate, Sir, at giving me an anſwer? You certainly muſt have employed him; for he would not of his own accord, I believe, have undertaken ſuch an errand, and eſpecially without acquainting me.

Blifil then anſwered: I own, Sir, I have been guilty of an offence, yet may I hope your pardon? — My pardon? ſaid Allworthy, very angrily. — Nay, Sir, anſwered Blifil, I knew you would be offended; yet ſurely my dear uncle will forgive the effects of the moſt amiable of human weakneſſes. Compaſſion for thoſe who do not deſerve it, I own, is a crime; and yet it is a crime from which you yourſelf are not entirely free. I know I have

been guilty of it in more than one inſtance to this very man; and I will own I did ſend Mr. Dowling, not on a vain and fruitleſs enquiry, but to diſcover the witneſſes, and to endeavour to ſoften their evidence. This, Sir, is the truth; which, though I intended to conceal from you, I will not deny.

I confeſs, ſaid Nightingale, this is the light in which it appeared to me from the gentleman's behaviour.

Now, Madam, ſaid Allworthy, I believe you will once in your life own you have entertained a wrong ſuſpicion, and are not ſo angry with my nephew as you was.

Mrs. Miller was ſilent; for though ſhe could not ſo haſtily be pleaſed with Blifil, whom ſhe looked upon to have been the ruin of Jones, yet in this particular inſtance he had impoſed upon her as well as upon the reſt; ſo entirely had the devil ſtood his friend. And, indeed, I look upon the vulgar obſervation, that the devil often deſerts his friends, and leaves them in the lurch, to be a great abuſe on that gentleman's character. Perhaps he may ſometimes deſert thoſe who are only his cup acquaintance; or who, at moſt, are but half his; but he generally ſtands by thoſe who are thoroughly his ſervants, and helps them off in all extremities, till their bargain expires.

As a conquered rebellion ſtrengthens a government, or as health is more perfectly eſtabliſhed by recovery from

from ſome diſeaſes; ſo anger, when removed, often gives new life to affection. This was the caſe of Mr. Allworthy; for Blifil having wiped off the greater ſuſpicion, the leſſer, which had been raiſed by Square's letter, ſunk of courſe, and was forgotten; and Thwackum, with whom he was greatly offended, bore alone all the reflections which Square had caſt on the enemies of Jones.

As for that young man, the reſentment of Mr. Allworthy began more and more to abate towards him. He told Blifil, he did not only forgive the extraordinary efforts of his good-nature, but would give him the pleaſure of following his example. Then turning to Mrs. Miller, with a ſmile which would have become an angel, he cry'd: What ſay you, Madam; ſhall we take a hackney-coach, and all of us together pay a viſit to your friend? I promiſe you it is not the firſt viſit I have made in a priſon.

Every reader, I believe, will be able to anſwer for the worthy woman; but they muſt have a great deal of good-nature, and be well acquainted with friendſhip, who can feel what ſhe felt on this occaſion. Few, I hope, are capable of feeling what now paſt in the mind of Blifil; but thoſe who are, will acknowledge, that it was impoſſible for him to raiſe any objection to this viſit. Fortune, however, or the gentleman lately mentioned above, ſtood his friend, and prevented his undergoing ſo great a ſhock; for

at the very inſtant when the coach was ſent for, Partridge arrived, and having called Mrs. Miller from the company, acquainted her with the dreadful accident lately come to light; and hearing Mr. Allworthy's intention, begged her to find ſome means of ſtopping him: For, ſays he, the matter muſt at all hazards be kept a ſecret from him; and if he ſhould now go, he will find Mr. Jones and his mother, who arrived juſt as I left him, lamenting over one another the horrid crime they have ignorantly committed.

The poor woman, who was almoſt deprived of her ſenſes at this dreadful news, was never leſs capable of invention than at preſent. However, as women are much readier at this than men, ſhe bethought herſelf of an excuſe, and returning to Allworthy, ſaid: I am ſure, Sir, you will be ſurpriſed at hearing any objection from me to the kind propoſal you juſt now made; and yet I am afraid of the conſequence of it, if carried immediately into execution. You muſt imagine, Sir, that all the calamities which have lately befallen this poor young fellow, muſt have thrown him into the loweſt dejection of ſpirits: and now, Sir, ſhould we all on a ſudden fling him into ſuch a violent fit of joy, as I know your preſence will occaſion, it may, I am afraid, produce ſome fatal miſchief, eſpecially as his ſervant, who is without, tells me he is very far from being well.

Is his ſervant without? cries Allworthy; pray call him hither. I will aſk him ſome queſtions concerning his maſter.

Partridge was at firſt afraid to appear before Mr. Allworthy; but was at length perſuaded, after Mrs. Miller, who had often heard his whole ſtory from his own mouth, had promiſed to introduce him.

Allworthy recollected Partridge the moment he came into the room, though many years had paſſed ſince he had ſeen him. Mrs. Miller therefore might have ſpared here a formal oration, in which indeed ſhe was ſomething prolix: for the reader, I believe, may have obſerved already that the good woman, among other things, had a tongue always ready for the ſervice of her friends.

And are you, ſaid Allworthy to Partridge, the ſervant of Mr. Jones? I can't ſay, Sir, anſwered he, that I am regularly a ſervant, but I live with him, an't pleaſe your honour, at preſent. *Non ſum qualis eram*, as your honour very well knows.

Mr. Allworthy then aſked him many queſtions concerning Jones, as to his health, and other matters; to all which Partridge anſwered, without having the leaſt regard to what was, but conſidered only what he would have things appear; for a ſtrict adherence to truth was not among the articles of this honeſt fellow's morality, or his religion.

During this dialogue Mr. Nigthingale took his leave, and preſently after Mrs. Miller left the room,

when Allworthy likewiſe diſpatched Blifil; for he imagined that Partridge, when alone with him, would be more explicit than before company. They were no ſooner left in private together, than Allworthy began as in the following chapter.

CHAP. VI.

In which the hiſtory is farther continued.

SURE, friend, ſaid the good man, you are the ſtrangeſt of all human beings. Not only to have ſuffered as you have formerly, for obſtinately perſiſting in a falſhood; but to perſiſt in it thus to the laſt, and to paſs thus upon the world for the ſervant of your own ſon! What intereſt can you have in all this? What can be your motive?

I ſee, Sir, ſaid Partridge, falling down upon his knees, that your honour is prepoſſeſſed againſt me, and reſolved not to believe any thing I ſay, and therefore what ſignifies my proteſtations? But yet there is one above who knows that I am not the father of this young man.

How! ſaid Allworthy, will you yet deny what you was formerly convicted of upon ſuch unanſwerable, ſuch manifeſt evidence? Nay, what a confirmation is your being now found with this very man, of all which twenty years ago appeared againſt you! I

thought you had left the country; nay, I thought you had long ſince been dead. — In what manner did you know any thing of this young man? Where did you meet with him, unleſs you had kept ſome correſpondence together? Do not deny this; for I promiſe you it will greatly raiſe your ſon in my opinion, to find that he hath ſuch a ſenſe of filial duty, as privately to ſupport his father for ſo many years.

If your honour will have patience to hear me, ſaid Partridge, I will tell you all. — Being bid go on, he proceeded thus: When your honour conceived that diſpleaſure againſt me, it ended in my ruin ſoon after; for I loſt my little ſchool; and the miniſter, thinking, I ſuppoſe, it would be agreeable to your honour, turned me out from the office of clerck; ſo that I had nothing to truſt to but the barber's ſhop, which in a country place like that, is a poor livelihood; and when my wife died (for till that time I received a penſion of 12 l. a year from an unknown hand, which indeed I believe was your honour's own, for no body that ever I heard of doth theſe things beſides;) but as I was ſaying, when ſhe died, this penſion forſook me; ſo that now as I owed two or three ſmall debts, which began to be troubleſome to me, particularly one * which an attorney brought up by law-charges

* This is a fact which I knew happened to a poor clergyman in Dorſetſhire, by the villainy of an attorney, who not contented with the exorbitant coſts to which the poor man was put by a

from 15 s. to near 30 l. and as I found all my uſual means of living had forſook me, I packed up my little all as well as I could, and went off.

The firſt place I came to was Saliſbury, where I got into the ſervice of a gentleman belonging to the law, and one of the beſt gentlemen that ever I knew; for he was not only good to me, but I know a thouſand good and charitable acts which he did while I ſtaid with him; and I have known him often refuſe buſineſs, becauſe it was paultry and oppreſſive. —You need not be ſo particular, ſaid Allworthy; I know this gentleman, and a very worthy man he is, and an honour to his profeſſion. — Well, Sir, continued Partridge, from hence I removed to Lymington, where I was above three years in the ſervice of another lawyer, who was likewiſe a very good ſort of a man, and to be ſure one of the merrieſt gentlemen in England. Well, Sir, at the end of the three years I ſet up a little ſchool, and was likely to do well again, had it not been for a moſt unlucky accident. Here I kept a pig; and one day, as ill fortune would have it, this pig broke out, and did a treſpaſs I think they call it, in a garden

ſingle action, brought afterwards another action on the judgment, as it was called. A method frequently uſed to oppreſs the poor, and bring money into the pockets of attorneys, to the great ſcandal of the law, of the nation, of chriſtianity, and even of human nature itſelf.

belonging to one of my neighbours, who was a proud, revengeful man, and employed a lawyer, one —one— I can't think of his name; but he ſent for a writ againſt me, and had me to ſize. When I came there, lord have mercy upon me — to hear what the counſellors ſaid. There was one that told my lord a parcel of the confoundedſt lies about me; he ſaid, that I uſed to drive my hogs into other folks gardens, and a great deal more: and at laſt he ſaid, he hoped I had at laſt brought my hogs to a fair market. To be ſure, one would have thought, that inſtead of being owner only of one poor little pig, I had been the greateſt hog-merchant in England. Well — Pray, ſaid Allworthy, do not be ſo particular. I have heard nothing of your ſon yet. O it was a great many years, anſwered Partridge, before I ſaw my ſon, as you are pleaſed to call him. — I went over to Ireland after this, and taught ſchool at Cork, (for that one ſuit ruined me again, and I lay ſeven years in Wincheſter gaol.) — Well, ſaid Allworthy, paſs that over till your return to England. — Then, Sir, ſaid he, it was about half a year ago that I landed at Briſtol, where I ſtaid ſome time, and not finding it do there, and hearing of a place between that and Glouceſter, where the barber was juſt dead, I went thither, and there I had been about two months, when Mr. Jones came thither. He then gave Allworthy a very particular account of their firſt meeting, and of every thing, as well as he could

remember, which had happened from that day to this; frequently interlarding his ſtory with panegyrics on Jones, and not forgetting to inſinuate the great love and reſpect which he had for Allworthy. He concluded with ſaying: Now, Sir, I have told your honour the whole truth. And then repeated a moſt ſolemn proteſtation, that he was no more the father of Jones than of the pope of Rome; and imprecated the moſt bitter curſes on his head, if he did not ſpeak truth.

What am I to think of this matter? cries Allworthy. For what purpoſe ſhould you ſo ſtrongly deny a fact, which I think it would be rather your intereſt to own? — Nay, Sir, anſwered Partridge, (for he could hold no longer) if your honour will not believe me, you are like ſoon to have ſatisfaction enough. I wiſh you had miſtaken the mother of this young man, as well as you have his father. — And now being aſked what he meant, with all the ſymptoms of horror, both in his voice and countenance, he told Allworthy the whole ſtory, which he had a little before expreſſed ſuch a deſire to Mrs. Miller to conceal from him.

Allworthy was almoſt as much ſhocked at this diſcovery as Partridge himſelf had been while he related it. Good heavens! ſays he, in what miſerable diſtreſſes do vice and imprudence involve men! How much beyond our deſigns are the effects of wickedneſs ſometimes carried! He had ſcarce uttered theſe words, when Mrs. Waters came haſtily

and abruptly into the room. Partridge no ſooner ſaw her, than he cried: Here, Sir, here is the very woman herſelf. This is the unfortunate mother of Mr. Jones; I am ſure ſhe will acquit me before your honour. — Pray, Madam —

Mrs. Waters, without paying any regard to what Partridge ſaid, and almoſt without taking any notice of him, advanced to Mr. Allworthy. I believe, Sir, it is ſo long ſince I had the honour of ſeeing you, that you do not recollect me. — Indeed, anſwered Allworthy, you are ſo very much altered, on many accounts, that had not this man already acquainted me who you are, I ſhould not have immediately called you to my remembrance. Have you, Madam, any particular buſineſs which brings you to me? — Allworthy ſpoke this with great reſerve; for the reader may eaſily believe he was not well pleaſed with the conduct of this lady; neither with what he had formerly heard, nor with what Partridge had now delivered.

Mrs. Waters anſwered: — Indeed, Sir, I have very particular buſineſs with you: and it is ſuch as I can impart only to yourſelf. — I muſt deſire, therefore, the favour of a word with you alone; for I aſſure you, what I have to tell you is of the utmoſt importance.

Partridge was then ordered to withdraw; but before he went, he begged the lady to ſatisfy Mr. Allworthy that he was perfectly innocent. To which

ſhe anſwered: — You need be under no apprehenſion, Sir, I ſhall ſatisfy Mr. Allworthy very perfectly of that matter.

Then Partridge withdrew, and that paſt between Mr. Allworthy and Mrs. Waters which is written in the next chapter.

CHAP. VII.

Continuation of the hiſtory.

MRS. Waters remaining a few moments ſilent, Mr. Allworthy could not refrain from ſaying: I am ſorry, Madam, to perceive, by what I have ſince heard, that you have made ſo very ill a uſe — Mr. Allworthy, ſays ſhe, interrupting him, I know I have faults, but ingratitude to you is not one of them. I never can nor ſhall forget your goodneſs, which I own I have very little deſerved; but be pleaſed to wave all upbraiding me at preſent, as I have ſo important an affair to communicate to you concerning this young man, to whom you have given my maiden name of Jones.

Have I then, ſaid Allworthy, ignorantly puniſhed an innocent man, in the perſon of him who hath juſt left us? Was he not the father of the child? — Indeed he was not, ſaid Mrs. Waters. You may be pleaſed to remember, Sir, I formerly told you, you ſhould one day know; and I acknowledge myſelf

to have been guilty of a cruel neglect, in not having diſcovered it to you before. Indeed I little knew how neceſſary it was. — Well, Madam, ſaid Allworthy, be pleaſed to proceed. You muſt remember, Sir, ſaid ſhe, a young fellow, whoſe name was Summer. Very well, cries Allworthy, he was the ſon of a clergyman of great learning and virtue, for whom I had the higheſt friendſhip. So it appeared, Sir, anſwered ſhe; for I believe you bred the young man up, and maintained him at the univerſity; where, I think, he had finiſhed his ſtudies, when he came to reſide at your houſe; a finer man, I muſt ſay, the ſun never ſhone upon; for, beſides the handſomeſt perſon I ever ſaw, he was ſo genteel, and had ſo much wit and good breeding! Poor gentleman, ſaid Allworthy, he was indeed untimely ſnatched away; and little did I think he had any ſins of this kind to anſwer for; for I plainly perceive, you are going to tell me he was the father of your child.

Indeed, Sir, anſwered ſhe, he was not. How? ſaid Allworthy, to what then tends all this preface? To a ſtory, Sir, ſaid ſhe, which I am concerned falls to my lot to unfold to you. — O, Sir, prepare to hear ſomething which will ſurpriſe you, will grieve you. Speak, ſaid Allworthy, I am conſcious of no crime, and cannot be afraid to hear. — Sir, ſaid ſhe, that Mr. Summer, the ſon of your friend, educated at your expence, who, after living a year in

the houſe as if he had been your own ſon, died there of the ſmall pox, was tenderly lamented by you, and buried as if he had been your own; that Summer, Sir, was the father of this child. — How! ſaid Allworthy, you contradict yourſelf. — That I do not, anſwered ſhe, he was indeed the father of this child, but not by me. Take care, Madam, ſaid Allworthy; do not, to ſhun the imputation of any crime, be guilty of falſhood. Remember there is one from whom you can conceal nothing, and before whoſe tribunal faſhood will only aggravate your guilt. Indeed, Sir, ſays ſhe, I am not his mother; nor would I now think myſelf ſo for the world. I know your reaſon, ſaid Allworthy, and ſhall rejoice as much as you to find it otherwiſe; yet you muſt remember, you yourſelf confeſt it before me. — So far what I confeſt, ſaid ſhe, was true, that theſe hands conveyed the infant to your bed; conveyed it thither at the command of its mother; at her commands I afterwards owned it, and thought myſelf, by her generoſity, nobly rewarded, both for my ſecrecy and my ſhame. Who could this woman be? ſaid Allworthy. Indeed I tremble to name her, anſwered Mrs. Waters. By all this preparation I am to gueſs that ſhe was a relation of mine, cried he. Indeed ſhe was a near one. At which words Allworthy ſtarted, and ſhe continued: — You had a ſiſter, Sir. — A ſiſter! repeated he, looking aghaſt. As there is truth in heaven, cries ſhe, your ſiſter was

the mother of that child you found between your ſheets. Can it be poſſible? cries he, good heavens! Have patience, Sir, ſaid Mrs. Waters, and I will unfold to you the whole ſtory. Juſt after your departure for London, Miſs Bridget came one day to the houſe of my mother. She was pleaſed to ſay ſhe had heard an extraordinary character of me, for my learning and ſuperior underſtanding to all the young women there, ſo ſhe was pleaſed to ſay. She then bid me come to her to the great houſe; where when I attended, ſhe employed me to read to her. She expreſſed great ſatisfaction in my reading, ſhewed great kindneſs to me, and made me many preſents. At laſt ſhe began to catechiſe me on the ſubject of ſecrecy, to which I gave her ſuch ſatisfactory anſwers, that, at laſt having locked the door of her room, ſhe took me into her cloſet, and then locking that door likewiſe, ſhe ſaid, ſhe ſhould convince me of the vaſt reliance ſhe had on my integrity, by communicating a ſecret in which her honour, and conſequently her life, was concerned. She then ſtopt, and after a ſilence of a few minutes, during which ſhe often wiped her eyes, ſhe enquired of me, if I thought my mother might ſafely be confided in. I anſwered, I would ſtake my life on her fidelity. She then imparted to me the great ſecret which laboured in her breaſt, and which, I believe, was delivered with more pains than ſhe afterwards ſuffered in child-birth. It was then contrived, that my mother and myſelf only

ſhould attend at the time, and that Mrs. Wilkins ſhould be ſent out of the way, as ſhe accordingly was, to the very furtheſt part of Dorſetſhire, to enquire the character of a ſervant; for the lady had turned away her own maid near three months before; during all which time I officiated about her perſon upon trial, as ſhe ſaid, though, as ſhe afterwards declared, I was not ſufficiently handy for the place. This, and many other ſuch things which ſhe uſed to ſay of me, were all thrown out to prevent any ſuſpicion which Wilkins might hereafter have, when I was to own the child; for ſhe thought it could never be believed ſhe would venture to hurt a young woman with whom ſhe had intruſted ſuch a ſecret. You may be aſſured, Sir, I was well paid for all theſe affronts, which, together with being informed with the occaſion of them, very well contented me. Indeed the lady had a greater ſuſpicion of Mrs. Wilkins than of any other perſon; not that ſhe had the leaſt averſion to the gentlewoman, but ſhe thought her incapable of keeping a ſecret, eſpecially from you, Sir: for I have often heard Miſs Bridget ſay, that if Mrs. Wilkins had committed a murder, ſhe believed ſhe would acquaint you with it. At laſt the expected day came, and Mrs. Wilkins, who had been kept a week in readineſs, and put off from time to time, upon ſome pretence or other, that ſhe might not return too ſoon, was diſpatched. Then the child was born, in the preſence only of myſelf and

my mother, and was by my mother conveyed to her own houſe, where it was privately kept by her till the evening of your return, when I, by the command of Miſs Bridget, conveyed it into the bed where you found it. And all ſuſpicions were afterwards laid aſleep by the artful conduct of your ſiſter, in pretending ill-will to the boy, and that any regard ſhe ſhewed him was out of meer complaiſance to you.

Mrs. Waters then made many proteſtations of the truth of this ſtory, and concluded by ſaying: Thus, Sir, you have at laſt diſcovered your nephew; for ſo I am ſure you will hereafter think him, and I queſtion not but he will be both an honour and a comfort to you under that appellation.

I need not, Madam, ſaid Allworthy, expreſs my aſtoniſhment at what you have told me; and yet ſurely you would not, and could not, have put together ſo many circumſtances to evidence an untruth. I confeſs, I recollect ſome paſſages relating to that Summer, which formerly gave me a conceit, that my ſiſter had ſome liking to him. I mentioned it to her: for I had ſuch a regard to the young man, as well on his own account, as on his father's, that I ſhould willingly have conſented to a match between them; but ſhe expreſt the higheſt diſdain of my unkind ſuſpicion, as ſhe called it; ſo that I never ſpoke more on the ſubject. Good heavens! Well! the lord diſpoſeth all things. — Yet ſure it was a moſt unjuſtifiable conduct in my ſiſter to carry this

ſecret with her out of the world. I promiſe you, Sir, ſaid Mrs. Waters, ſhe always profeſt a contrary intention, and frequently told me, ſhe intended one day to communicate it to you. She ſaid indeed, ſhe was highly rejoiced that her plot had ſucceeded ſo well, and that you had of your own accord taken ſuch a fancy to the child, that it was yet unneceſſary to make any expreſs declaration. Oh! Sir, had that lady lived to have ſeen this poor young man turned like a vagabond from your houſe; nay, Sir, could ſhe have lived to hear that you had yourſelf employed a lawyer to proſecute him for a murder of which he was not guilty — Forgive me, Mr. Allworthy, I muſt ſay it was unkind. — Indeed you have been abuſed, he never deſerved it of you. Indeed, Madam, ſaid Allworthy, I have been abuſed by the perſon, whoever he was, that told you ſo. Nay, Sir, ſaid ſhe, I would not be miſtaken, I did not preſume to ſay you were guilty of any wrong. The gentleman who came to me, propoſed no ſuch matter: he only ſaid, taking me for Mr. Fitzpatrick's wife, that if Mr. Jones had murdered my huſband, I ſhould be aſſiſted with any money I wanted to carry on the proſecution, by a very worthy gentleman, who, he ſaid, was well apprized what a villain I had to deal with. It was by this man I found out who Mr. Jones was; and this man, whoſe name is Dowling, Mr. Jones tells me, is your ſteward. I diſcovered his name by a very odd accident; for he himſelf refuſed

refuſed to tell it me; but Partridge, who met him at my lodgings the ſecond time he came, knew him formerly at Saliſbury.

And did this Mr. Dowling, ſays Allworthy, with great aſtoniſhment in his countenance, tell you that I would aſſiſt in the proſecution? — No, Sir, anſwered ſhe, I will not charge him wrongfully. He ſaid I ſhould be aſſiſted, but he mentioned no name. — Yet, you muſt pardon me, Sir, if from circumſtances I thought it could be no other. — Indeed, Madam, ſays Allworthy, from circumſtances I am too well convinced it was another. — Good heaven! by what wonderful means is the blackeſt and deepeſt villainy ſometimes diſcovered! Shall I beg you, Madam, to ſtay till the perſon you have mentioned comes; for I expect him every minute; nay, he may be, perhaps, already in the houſe.

Allworthy then ſtept to the door, in order to call a ſervant, when in came, not Mr. Dowling, but the gentleman who will be ſeen in the next chapter.

CHAP. VIII.

Further continuation.

THE gentleman who now arrived was no other than Mr. Weſtern. He no ſooner ſaw Allworthy, than, without conſidering in the leaſt the preſence of Mrs. Waters, he began to vociferate in the following manner: Fine doings at my houſe! A rare kettle of fiſh I ha diſcovered at laſt! Who the devil would be plagued with a daughter? What's the matter, neighbour? ſaid Allworthy. Matter enough, anſwered Weſtern. When I thought ſhe was a juſt coming to; nay, when ſhe had in a manner promiſed me to do as I would ha her, and when I was a hoped to ha had nothing more to do than to ha ſent for the lawyer, and finiſhed all — What do you think I ha found out? that the little b — hath been playing tricks with me all the while, and carrying on a correſpondence with that baſtard of yours. Siſter Weſtern, whom I have quarrelled with upon her account, ſent me word o't, and I ordered her pockets to be ſearched when ſhe was aſleep, and here I ha got un ſigned with the ſon of a whore's own name. I ha not had patience to read half o't, for 'tis longer than one of parſon Supple's ſermons; but I find

plainly it is all about love; and indeed what ſhould it be elſe? I ha packed her up in chamber again, and to morrow morning down ſhe goes into the country, unleſs ſhe conſents to be married directly, and there ſhe ſhall live in a garret upon bread and water all her days; and the ſooner ſuch a b — breaks her heart, the better; though d — n her, that I believe is too tough. She will live long enough to plague me. Mr. Weſtern, anſwered Allworthy, you know I have always proteſted againſt force, and you yourſelf conſented that none ſhould be uſed. Ay, cries he, that was only upon condition that ſhe would conſent without. What the devil and doctor Fauſtus! ſhan't I do what I will with my own daughter, eſpecially when I deſire nothing but her own good? Well, neighbour, anſwered Allworthy, if you will give me leave, I will undertake once to argue with the young lady. Will you? ſaid Weſtern: why that is kind now and neighbourly, and mayhap you will do more than I ha been able to do with her; for I promiſe you ſhe hath a very good opinion of you. Well, Sir, ſaid Allworthy, if you will go home, and releaſe the young lady from her captivity, I will wait upon her within this half hour. — But ſuppoſe, ſaid Weſtern, ſhe ſhould run away with un in the mean time? For lawyer Dowling tells me, there is no hopes of hanging the fellow at laſt; for that the man is alive, and like to do well, and that he thinks Jones will be out of priſon again preſently. — How! ſaid Allworthy, what

did you employ him then to enquire, or to do any thing in that matter? Not I, anſwered Weſtern, he mentioned it to me juſt now of his own accord. — Juſt now! cries Allworthy, why where did you ſee him then? I want much to ſee Mr. Dowling. — Why you may ſee un an you will preſently at my lodgings; for there is to be a meeting of lawyers there this morning, about a mortgage. — Icod! I ſhall loſe two or three thouſand pounds, I believe, by that honeſt gentleman, Mr. Nightingale. — Well, Sir, ſaid Allworthy, I will be with you within the half hour. And do for once, cries the 'ſquire, take a fool's advice; never think of dealing with her by gentle methods, take my word for it, thoſe will never do. I ha tried um long enough. She muſt be frightened into it, there is no other way. Tell her I'm her father; and of the horrid ſin of diſobedience, and of the dreadful puniſhment of it in t'other world, and then tell her about being locked up all her life in a garret in this, and being kept only on bread and water. I will do all I can, ſaid Allworthy; for I promiſe you, there is nothing I wiſh for more than an alliance with this amiable creature. Nay, the girl is well enough, for matter o'that, cries the 'ſquire; a man may go farther and meet with worſe meat; that I may declare o' her, thof ſhe be my own daughter. And if ſhe will but be obedient to me, there is n'arrow a father within a hundred miles o' the place, that loves a daughter

better than I do: but I ſee you are buſy with the lady here, ſo I will go huome and expect you, and ſo your humble ſervant.

As ſoon as Mr. Weſtern was gone, Mrs. Waters ſaid: I ſee, Sir, the 'ſquire hath not the leaſt remembrance of my face. I believe, Mr. Allworthy, you would not have known me neither. I am very conſiderably altered ſince that day when you ſo kindly gave me that advice, which I had been happy had I followed. — Indeed, Madam, cries Allworthy, it gave me great concern when I firſt heard the contrary. Indeed, Sir, ſays ſhe, I was ruined by a very deep ſcheme of villainy, which if you knew, though I pretend not to think it would juſtify me in your opinion, it would at leaſt mitigate my offence, and induce you to pity me; you are not now at leiſure to hear my whole ſtory; but this I aſſure you, I was betrayed by the moſt ſolemn promiſes of marriage; nay, in the eye of heaven I was married to him: for after much reading on the ſubject, I am convinced that particular ceremonies are only requiſite to give a legal ſanction to marriage, and have only a worldly uſe in giving a woman the privileges of a wife; but that ſhe who lives conſtant to one man, after a ſolemn private affiance, whatever the world may call her, hath little to charge on her own conſcience. I am ſorry, Madam, ſaid Allworthy, you made ſo ill an uſe of your learning. Indeed it would have been well that you had been poſſeſſed

of much more, or had remained in a ſtate of ignorance. And yet, Madam, I am afraid you have more than this ſin to anſwer for. During his life, anſwered ſhe, which was above a dozen years, I moſt ſolemnly aſſure you, I had not. And conſider, Sir, on my behalf, what is in the power of a woman ſtript of her reputation, and left deſtitute; whether the good-natured world will ſuffer ſuch a ſtray ſheep to return to the road of virtue, even if ſhe was never ſo deſirous. I proteſt then I would have choſe it, had it been in my power; but neceſſity drove me into the arms of captain Waters, with whom, though ſtill unmarried, I lived as a wife for many years, and went by his name. I parted with this gentleman at Worceſter, on his march againſt the rebels, and it was then I accidentally met with Mr. Jones, who reſcued me from the hands of a villain. Indeed he is the worthieſt of men. No young gentleman of his age is, I believe, freer from vice, and few have the twentieth part of his virtues; nay, whatever vices he hath had, I am firmly perſuaded he hath now taken a reſolution to abandon them. I hope he hath, cries Allworthy, and I hope he will preſerve that reſolution. I muſt ſay I have ſtill the ſame hopes with regard to yourſelf. The world, I do agree, are apt to be too unmerciful on theſe occaſions; yet time and perſeverance will get the better of this their diſinclination, as I may call it, to pity; for though they are not, like heaven, ready to receive a

penitent ſinner; yet a continued repentance will at length obtain mercy even with the world. This you may be aſſured of, Mrs. Waters, that whenever I find you are ſincere in ſuch good intentions, you ſhall want no aſſiſtance in my power to make them effectual.

Mrs. Waters fell now upon her knees before him, and, in a flood of tears, made him many moſt paſſionate acknowledgments of his goodneſs, which, as ſhe truly ſaid, ſavoured more of the divine than human nature.

Allworthy raiſed her up, and ſpoke in the moſt tender manner, making uſe of every expreſſion which his invention could ſuggeſt to comfort her, when he was interrupted by the arrival of Mr. Dowling, who, upon his firſt entrance, ſeeing Mrs. Waters, ſtarted, and appeared in ſome confuſion; from which he ſoon recovered himſelf as well as he could, and then ſaid, he was in the utmoſt haſte to attend council at Mr. Weſtern's lodgings; but, however, thought it his duty to call and acquaint him with the opinion of council, upon the caſe which he had before told him, which was, that the converſion of the monies in that caſe could not be queſtioned in a criminal cauſe, but that an action of trover might be brought, and if it appeared to the jury to be the monies of plaintiff, that plaintiff would recover a verdict for the value.

Allworthy, without making any anſwer to this,

bolted the door, and then advancing with a ſtern look to Dowling, he ſaid: Whatever be your haſte, Sir, I muſt firſt receive an anſwer to ſome queſtions. Do you know this lady? — That lady, Sir? anſwered Dowling, with great heſitation. Allworthy then, with the moſt ſolemn voice, ſaid: Look you, Mr. Dowling, as you value my favour, or your continuance a moment longer in my ſervice, do not heſitate nor prevaricate; but anſwer faithfully and truly to every queſtion I aſk. — Do you know this lady? — Yes, Sir, ſaid Dowling, I have ſeen the lady. — Where, Sir? — At her own lodgings. — Upon what buſineſs did you go thither, Sir; and who ſent you? — I went, Sir, to enquire, Sir, about Mr. Jones. — And who ſent you to enquire about him? — Who, Sir? why, Sir, Mr. Blifil ſent me. — And what did you ſay to the lady concerning that matter? — Nay, Sir, it is impoſſible to recollect every word. — Will you pleaſe, Madam, to aſſiſt the gentleman's memory? — He told me, Sir, ſaid Mrs. Waters, that if Mr. Jones had murdered my huſband, I ſhould be aſſiſted by any money I wanted to carry on the proſecution, by a very worthy gentleman, who was well apprized what a villain I had to deal with. Theſe, I can ſafely ſwear, were the very words he ſpoke. — Were theſe the words, Sir? ſaid Allworthy. — I cannot charge my memory exactly, cries Dowling, but I believe I did ſpeak to that purpoſe. — And did Mr. Blifil order you to ſay ſo? — I am

ſure, Sir, I ſhould not have gone on my own accord, nor have willingly exceeded my authority in matters of this kind. If I ſaid ſo, I muſt have ſo underſtood Mr. Blifil's inſtructions. — Look you, Mr. Dowling, ſaid Allworthy, I promiſe you before this lady, that whatever you have done in this affair by Mr. Blifil's order, I will forgive; provided you now tell me ſtrictly the truth: for I believe what you ſay, that you would not have acted of your own accord, and without authority, in this matter. — Mr. Blifil then likewiſe ſent you to examine the two fellows at Alderſgate? — He did, Sir. — Well, and what inſtructions did he then give you? Recollect as well as you can, and tell me, as near as poſſible, the very words he uſed. — Why, Sir, Mr. Blifil ſent me to find out the perſons who were eye-witneſſes of this fight. He ſaid, he feared they might be tampered with by Mr. Jones, or ſome of his friends. He ſaid, blood required blood; and that not only all who concealed a murderer, but thoſe who omitted any thing in their power to bring him to juſtice, were ſharers in his guilt. He ſaid, he found you was very deſirous of having the villain brought to juſtice, though it was not proper you ſhould appear in it. — He did ſo? ſaid Allworthy. — Yes, Sir, cries Mr. Dowling, I ſhould not, I am ſure, have proceeded ſuch lengths for the ſake of any other perſon living but your worſhip. — What lengths, Sir? ſaid Mr. Allworthy. — Nay, Sir, cries Dowling, I would not

have your worſhip think I would, on any account, be guilty of ſubornation of perjury; but there are two ways of delivering evidence. I told them therefore, that if any offers ſhould be made them on the other ſide, they ſhould refuſe them and that they might be aſſured they ſhould loſe nothing by being honeſt men, and telling the truth. I ſaid, we were told, that Mr. Jones had aſſaulted the gentleman firſt, and that if that was the truth, they ſhould declare it; and I did give them ſome hints that they ſhould be no loſers. —— I think you went lengths indeed, cries Allworthy. — Nay, Sir, anſwered Dowling, I am ſure I did not deſire them to tell an untruth; nor ſhould I have ſaid what I did, unleſs it had been to oblige you. —— You would not have thought, I believe, ſays Allworthy, to have obliged me, had you known that this Mr. Jones was my own nephew. — I am ſure, Sir, anſwered he, it did not become me to take any notice of what I thought you deſired to conceal. — How! cries Allworthy, and did you know it then? —— Nay, Sir, anſwered Dowling, if your worſhip bids me ſpeak the truth, I am ſure I ſhall do it. — Indeed, Sir, I did know it; for they were almoſt the laſt words which Madam Blifil ever ſpoke, which ſhe mentioned to me as I ſtood alone by her bed-ſide, when ſhe delivered me the letter I brought your worſhip from her. — What letter? cries Allworthy. — The letter, Sir, anſwered Dowling, which I brought from Saliſbury, and which

I delivered into the hands of Mr. Blifil. — O heavens! cries Allworthy. Well, and what were the words? What did my ſiſter ſay to you? — She took me by the hand, anſwered he, and as ſhe delivered me the letter, ſaid; I ſcarce know what I have written. Tell my brother, Mr. Jones is his nephew — he is my ſon. — Bleſs him, ſays ſhe, and then fell backward, as if dying away. I preſently called in the people, and ſhe never ſpoke more to me, and died within a few minutes afterwards. — Allworthy ſtood a minute ſilent, lifting up his eyes, and then turning to Dowling, ſaid: — How came you, Sir, not to deliver me this meſſage? Your worſhip, anſwered he, muſt remember that you was at that time ill in bed; and being in a violent hurry, as indeed I always am, I delivered the letter and meſſage to Mr. Blifil, who told me he would carry them both to you, which he hath ſince told me he did, and that your worſhip, partly out of friendſhip to Mr. Jones, and partly out of regard to your ſiſter, would never have it mentioned; and did intend to conceal it from the world; and therefore, Sir, if you had not mentioned it to me firſt, I am certain I ſhould never have thought it belonged to me to ſay any thing of the matter, either to your worſhip, or any other perſon.

We have remarked ſomewhere already, that it is poſſible for a man to convey a lie in the words of truth; this was the caſe at preſent: for Blifil had,

in fact, told Dowling what he now related; but had not impoſed upon him, nor indeed had imagined that he was able ſo to do. In reality, the promiſes which Blifil had made to Dowling, were the motives which had induced him to ſecrecy; and as he very plainly ſaw Blifil would not be able to keep them, he thought proper now to make this confeſſion, which the promiſes of forgiveneſs, joined to the threats, the voice, the looks of Allworthy, and the diſcoveries he had made before, extorted from him, who was beſides taken unawares, and had no time to conſider of evaſions.

Allworthy appeared well ſatisfied with this relation, and having enjoined on Dowling ſtrict ſilence as to what had paſt, conducted that gentleman himſelf to the door, leſt he ſhould ſee Blifil, who was returned to his chamber, where he exulted in the thoughts of his laſt deceit on his uncle, and little ſuſpected what had ſince paſſed below ſtairs.

As Allworthy was returning to his room, he met Mrs. Miller in the entry, who, with a face all pale and full of terror, ſaid to him: O! Sir, I find this wicked woman hath been with you, and you know all; yet do not on this account abandon the poor young man. Conſider, Sir, he was ignorant it was his own mother; and the diſcovery itſelf will moſt probably break his heart, without your unkindneſs.

Madam, ſays Allworthy, I am under ſuch an aſtoniſhment at what I have heard, that I am really

unable to ſatisfy you; but come with me into my room. Indeed, Mrs. Miller, I have made ſurpriſing diſcoveries, and you ſhall ſoon know them.

The poor woman followed him trembling; and now Allworthy going up to Mrs. Waters, took her by the hand, and then turning to Mrs. Miller, ſaid: What reward ſhall I beſtow upon this gentlewoman for the ſervices ſhe hath done me? O! Mrs. Miller, you have a thouſand times heard me call the young man, to whom you are ſo faithful a friend, my ſon. Little did I then think he was indeed related to me at all. — Your friend, Madam, is my nephew; he is the brother of that wicked viper which I have ſo long nouriſhed in my boſom. — She will herſelf tell you the whole ſtory, and how the youth came to paſs for her ſon. Indeed, Mrs. Miller, I am convinced that he hath been wronged, and that I have been abuſed; abuſed by one whom you too juſtly ſuſpected of being a villain. He is, in truth, the worſt of villains.

The joy which Mrs. Miller now felt, bereft her of the power of ſpeech, and might perhaps have deprived her of her ſenſes, if not of life, had not a friendly ſhower of tears come ſeaſonably to her relief. At length recovering ſo far from her tranſport as to be able to ſpeak, ſhe cried: And is my dear Mr. Jones then your nephew, Sir, and not the ſon of this lady? And are your eyes opened to him at laſt? And ſhall I live to ſee him as happy as he

deſerves? He certainly is my nephew, ſays Allworthy, and I hope all the reſt. — And is this dear good woman, the perſon, cries ſhe, to whom all this diſcovery is owing? — She is indeed, ſays Allworthy. — Why then, cried Mrs. Miller, upon her knees, may heaven ſhower down its choiceſt bleſſings upon her head, and for this one good action forgive her all her ſins, be they never ſo many.

Mrs. Waters, then informed them, that ſhe believed Jones would very ſhortly be releaſed; for that the ſurgeon was gone, in company with a nobleman, to the juſtice who committed him, in order to certify that Mr. Fitzpatrick was out of all manner of danger, and to procure to the priſoner his liberty.

Allworthy ſaid, he ſhould be glad to find his nephew there at his return home; but that he was then obliged to go on ſome buſineſs of conſequence. He then called to a ſervant to fetch him a chair, and preſently left the two ladies together.

Mr. Blifil hearing the chair ordered, came down ſtairs to attend upon his uncle; for he never was deficient in ſuch acts of duty. He aſked his uncle, if he was going out? which is a civil way of aſking a man, where he is going? to which the other making no anſwer, he again deſired to know, when he would be pleaſed to return? — Allworthy made no anſwer to this neither, till he was juſt getting into his chair, and then turning about, he ſaid: —

Harkee, Sir, do you find out, before my return, the letter which your mother ſent me on her death-bed. Allworthy then departed, and left Blifil in a ſituation to be envied only by a man who is juſt going to be hanged.

CHAP. IX.

A further continuation.

ALLWORTHY took an opportunity, whilſt he was in the chair, of reading the letter from Jones to Sophia, which Weſtern delivered him; and there were ſome expreſſions in it concerning himſelf, which drew tears from his eyes. At length he arrived at Mr. Weſtern's, and was introduced to Sophia.

When the firſt ceremonies were paſt, and the gentleman and lady had taken their chairs, a ſilence of ſome minutes enſued; during which, the latter, who had been prepared for the viſit by her father, ſat playing with her fan, and had every mark of confuſion both in her countenance and behaviour. At length Allworthy, who was himſelf a little diſconcerted, began thus: I am afraid, Miſs Weſtern, my family hath been the occaſion of giving you ſome uneaſineſs; to which, I fear, I have innocently become more inſtrumental than I intended. Be aſſured, Madam, had I at firſt known how diſagreeable

the propoſals had been, I ſhould not have ſuffered you to have been ſo long perſecuted. I hope therefore, you will not think the deſign of this viſit is to trouble you with any further ſolicitations of that kind, but entirely to relieve you from them.

Sir, ſaid Sophia, with a little modeſt heſitation, this behaviour is moſt kind and generous, and ſuch as I could expect only from Mr. Allworthy: but as you have been ſo kind to mention this matter, you will pardon me for ſaying it hath indeed given me great uneaſineſs, and hath been the occaſion of my ſuffering much cruel treatment from a father, who was, till that unhappy affair, the tendereſt and fondeſt of all parents. I am convinced, Sir, you are too good and generous to reſent my refuſal of your nephew. Our inclinations are not in our own power; and whatever may be his merit, I cannot force them in his favour. I aſſure you, moſt amiable young lady, ſaid Allworthy, I am capable of no ſuch reſentment, had the perſon been my own ſon, and had I entertained the higheſt eſteem for him. For you ſay truly, Madam, we cannot force our inclinations, much leſs can they be directed by another. Oh! Sir, anſwered Sophia, every word you ſpeak proves you to deſerve that good, that great, that benevolent character the whole world allows you. I aſſure you, Sir, nothing leſs than the certain proſpect of future miſery could have made me reſiſt the commands of my father. I ſincerely believe you, Madam, replied

Allworthy,

Allworthy, and I heartily congratulate you on your prudent foreſight, ſince by ſo juſtifiable a reſiſtance you have avoided miſery indeed. You ſpeak now, Mr. Allworthy, cries ſhe, with a delicacy which few men are capable of feeling; but ſurely in my opinion, to lead our lives with one to whom we are indifferent, muſt be a ſtate of wretchedneſs. — Perhaps that wretchedneſs would be even increaſed by a ſenſe of the merits of the object to whom we cannot give our affections. If I had married Mr. Blifil — Pardon my interrupting you, Madam, anſwered Allworthy, but I cannot bear the ſuppoſition. — Believe me, Miſs Weſtern, I rejoice, from my heart, I rejoice in your eſcape. — I have diſcovered the wretch, for whom you have ſuffered all this cruel violence from your father, to be a villain. How, Sir! cries Sophia, — you muſt believe this ſurpriſes me. — It hath ſurpriſed me, Madam, anſwered Allworthy, and ſo it will the world. — But I have acquainted you with the real truth. Nothing but truth, ſays Sophia, can, I am convinced, come from the lips of Mr. Allworthy. — Yet, Sir, ſuch ſudden, ſuch unexpected news — Diſcovered, you ſay — may villainy be ever ſo! — You will ſoon enough hear the ſtory, cries Allworthy; — at preſent let us not mention ſo deteſted a name — I have another matter of a very ſerious nature to propoſe. — O! Miſs Weſtern, I know your vaſt worth, nor can I ſo eaſily part with the ambition of being allied

to it.—I have a near relation, Madam, a young man whoſe character is, I am convinced, the very oppoſite to that of this wretch, and whoſe fortune I will make equal to what his was to have been.—Could I, Madam, hope you would admit a viſit from him? Sophia, after a minute's ſilence, anſwered: I will deal with the utmoſt ſincerity with Mr. Allworthy. His character, and the obligation I have juſt received from him, demand it. I have determined at preſent to liſten to no ſuch propoſals from any perſon. My only deſire is to be reſtored to the affection of my father, and to be again the miſtreſs of his family. This, Sir, I hope to owe to your good offices. Let me beſeech you, let me conjure you, by all the goodneſs which I, and all who know you, have experienced; do not the very moment when you have releaſed me from one perſecution, do not engage me in another, as miſerable and as fruitleſs. Indeed, Miſs Weſtern, replied Allworthy, I am capable of no ſuch conduct; and if this be your reſolution, he muſt ſubmit to the diſappointment, whatever torments he may ſuffer under it. I muſt ſmile now, Mr. Allworthy, anſwered Sophia, when you mention the torments of a man whom I do not know, and who can conſequently have ſo little acquaintance with me. Pardon me, dear young lady, cries Allworthy, I begin now to be afraid he hath had too much acquaintance for the repoſe of his future days;

ſince, if ever man was capable of a ſincere, violent, and noble paſſion, ſuch, I am convinced, is my unhappy nephew's for Miſs Weſtern. A nephew of yours! Mr. Allworthy, anſwered Sophia. It is ſurely ſtrange, I never heard of him before. Indeed, Madam, cries Allworthy, it is only the circumſtance of his being my nephew to which you are a ſtranger, and which, till this day, was a ſecret to me. — Mr. Jones, who has long loved you, he! he is my nephew. Mr. Jones your nephew, Sir? cries Sophia. Can it be poſſible? — He is indeed, Madam, anſwered Allworthy. He is my own ſiſter's ſon —- as ſuch I ſhall always own him; nor am I aſhamed of owning him. I am much more aſhamed of my paſt behaviour to him; but I was as ignorant of his merit as of his birth. Miſs Weſtern, I have uſed him cruelly — Indeed I have. — Here the good man wiped his eyes, and after a ſhort pauſe proceeded: — I never ſhall be able to reward him for his ſufferings without your aſſiſtance. — Believe me, moſt amiable young lady, I muſt have a great eſteem of that offering which I make to your worth. I know he hath been guilty of faults; but there is great goodneſs of heart at the bottom. Believe me, Madam, there is. — Here he ſtopped, ſeeming to expect an anſwer, which he preſently received from Sophia, after ſhe had a little recovered herſelf from the hurry of ſpirits into which ſo ſtrange and ſudden information had thrown her: I ſincerely wiſh you

joy, Sir, of a diſcovery in which you ſeem to have ſuch ſatisfaction. I doubt not but you will have all the comfort you can promiſe yourſelf from it. The young gentleman hath certainly a thouſand good qualities, which makes it impoſſible he ſhould not behave well to ſuch an uncle. — I hope, Madam, ſaid Allworthy, he hath thoſe good qualities which muſt make him a good huſband. — He muſt, I am ſure, be of all men the moſt abandoned, if a lady of your merit ſhould condeſcend — You muſt pardon me, Mr. Allworthy, anſwered Sophia, I cannot liſten to a propoſal of this kind. Mr. Jones, I am convinced, hath much merit; but I ſhall never receive Mr. Jones as one who is to be my huſband — Upon my honour, I never will. — Pardon me, Madam, cries Allworthy, if I am a little ſurpriſed, after what I have heard from Mr. Weſtern — I hope the unhappy young man hath done nothing to forfeit your good opinion, if he had ever the honour to enjoy it. — Perhaps he may have been miſrepreſented to you, as he was to me. The ſame villainy may have injured him every where. — He is no murderer, I aſſure you, as he hath been called. — Mr. Allworthy, anſwered Sophia, I have told you my reſolution. I wonder not at what my father hath told you; but whatever his apprehenſions or fears have been, if I know my heart, I have given no occaſion for them; ſince it hath always been a fixed principle with me, never to have married without

his conſent. This is, I think, the duty of a child to a parent; and this, I hope, nothing could ever have prevailed with me to ſwerve from. I do not indeed conceive, that the authority of any parent can oblige us to marry in direct oppoſition to our inclinations. To avoid a force of this kind, which I had reaſon to ſuſpect, I left my father's houſe, and ſought protection elſewhere. This is the truth of my ſtory; and if the world, or my father, carry my intentions any farther, my own conſcience will acquit me. I hear you, Miſs Weſtern, cries Mr. Allworthy, with admiration. I admire the juſtneſs of your ſentiments; but ſurely there is more in this. I am cautious of offending you, young lady; but am I to look on all which I have hitherto heard or ſeen, as a dream only? And have you ſuffered ſo much cruelty from your father on the account of a man to whom you have been always abſolutely indifferent? I beg, Sir, anſwered Sophia, you will not inſiſt on my reaſons. — Yes, I have ſuffered indeed: I will not, Mr. Allworthy, conceal — I will be very ſincere with you — I own I had a great opinion of Mr. Jones — I believe — I know I have ſuffered for my opinion — I have been treated cruelly by my aunt, as well as by my father; but that is now paſt — I beg I may not be farther preſſed; for whatever hath been, my reſolution is now fixed. Your nephew, Sir, hath many virtues — he hath great virtues, Mr. Allworthy. I queſtion not but he will do you

honour in the world, and make you happy. — I wiſh I could make him ſo, Madam, replied Allworthy; but that, I am convinced, is only in your power. It is that conviction which hath made me ſo earneſt a ſolicitor in his favour. You are deceived; indeed, Sir, you are deceived, ſaid Sophia — I hope not by him — It is ſufficient to have deceived me. Mr. Allworthy, I muſt inſiſt on being preſt no farther on this ſubject. — I ſhould be ſorry — Nay, I will not injure him in your favour. I wiſh Mr. Jones very well. I ſincerely wiſh him well; and I repeat it again to you, whatever demerit he may have to me, I am certain he hath many good qualities. I do not diſown my former thoughts; but nothing can ever recall them. At preſent there is not a man upon earth whom I would more reſolutely reject than Mr. Jones; nor would the addreſſes of Mr. Blifil himſelf be leſs agreeable to me.

Weſtern had been long impatient for the event of this conference, and was juſt now arrived at the door to liſten; when having heard the laſt ſentiments of his daughter's heart, he loſt all temper, and burſting open the door in a rage, cried out: — It is a lie. It is a d — n'd lie. It is all owing to that d -- n'd raſcal Jones; and if ſhe could get at un, ſhe'd ha un any hour of the day. Here Allworthy interpoſed, and addreſſing himſelf to the 'ſquire with ſome anger in his look, he ſaid: Mr. Weſtern, you have not kept your word with me. You promiſed to

abſtain from all violence. — Why ſo I did, cries Weſtern, as long as it was poſſible; but to hear a wench telling ſuch confounded lies — Zounds! doth ſhe think if ſhe can make vools of other volk, ſhe can make one of me? — No, no, I know her better than thee doſt. I am ſorry to tell you, Sir, anſwered Allworthy, it doth not appear by your behaviour to this young lady, that you know her at all. I aſk pardon for what I ſay; but I think our intimacy, your own deſires, and the occaſion, juſtify me. She is your daughter, Mr. Weſtern, and I think ſhe doth honour to your name. If I was capable of envy, I ſhould ſooner envy you on this account, than any other man whatever. — Od-rabbit it, cries the 'ſquire, I wiſh ſhe was thine with all my heart — wouldſt ſoon be glad to be rid of the trouble o' her. — Indeed, my good friend, anſwered Allworthy, you yourſelf are the cauſe of all the trouble you complain of. Place that confidence in the young lady which ſhe ſo well deſerves, and I am certain you will be the happieſt father on earth. — I confidence in her! cries the 'ſquire. -- 'Sblood! what confidence can I place in her, when ſhe won't do as I wou'd ha her? Let her gee but her conſent to marry as I wou'd ha her, and I'll place as much confidence in her as wouldſt ha me. --You have no right, neighbour, anſwered Allworthy, to inſiſt on any ſuch conſent. A negative voice your daughter allows you, and god and nature have thought proper to allow you

no more. A negative voice? cries the 'ſquire — Ay! ay! I'll ſhew you what a negative voice I ha. — Go along, go into your chamber, go, you ſtubborn — Indeed, Mr. Weſtern, ſaid Allworthy, — Indeed you uſe her cruelly — I cannot bear to ſee this — You ſhall, you muſt behave to her in a kinder manner. She deſerves the beſt of treatment. Yes, yes, ſaid the 'ſquire, I know what ſhe deſerves: now ſhe's gone, I'll ſhew you what ſhe deſerves. — See here, Sir, here is a letter from my couſin, my lady Bellaſton, in which ſhe is ſo kind to gee me to underſtand, that the fellow is got out of priſon again; and here ſhe adviſes me to take all the care I can o' the wench. Od-zookers! neighbour Allworthy, you don't know what it is to govern a daughter.

The 'ſquire ended his ſpeech with ſome compliments to his own ſagacity; and then Allworthy, after a formal preface, acquainted him with the whole diſcovery which he had made concerning Jones, with his anger to Blifil, and with every particular which had been diſcloſed to the reader in the preceding chapters.

Men over-violent in their diſpoſitions, are, for the moſt part, as changeable in them. No ſooner then was Weſtern informed of Mr. Allworthy's intention to make Jones his heir, than he joined heartily with the uncle in every commendation of the nephew, and became as eager for her marriage with Jones, as he had before been to couple her to Blifil.

Here Mr. Allworthy was again forced to interpoſe, and to relate what had paſſed between him and Sophia, at which he teſtified great ſurpriſe.

The 'ſquire was ſilent a moment, and looked wild with aſtoniſhment at this account. — At laſt he cried out: Why what can be the meaning of this, neighbour Allworthy? Vond o' un ſhe was, that I'll be ſworn to. — Od-zookers! I ha hit o't. As ſure as a gun I ha hit o' the very right o't. It's all along o' ziſter. The girl hath got a hankering after this ſon of a whore of a lord. I vound 'em together at my couſin, my lady Bellaſton's. He hath turned the head o' her that's certain — but d — n me if he ſhall ha her. — I'll ha no lords nor courtiers in my vamily.

Allworthy now made a long ſpeech, in which he repeated his reſolution to avoid all violent meaſures, and very earneſtly recommended gentle methods to Mr. Weſtern, as thoſe by which he might be aſſured of ſucceeding beſt with his daughter. He then took his leave, and returned back to Mrs. Miller, but was forced to comply with the earneſt entreaties of the 'ſquire, in promiſing to bring Mr. Jones to viſit him that afternoon, that he might, as he ſaid, make all matters up with the young gentleman. At Mr. Allworthy's departure, Weſtern promiſed to follow his advice in his behaviour to Sophia, ſaying: I don't know how 'tis, but d — n me, Allworthy, if you don't make me always do juſt as you pleaſe;

and yet I ha as good an eſtate as you, and am in the commiſſion of the peace as well as yourſelf.

CHAP. X.

Wherein the hiſtory begins to draw towards a concluſion.

WHEN Allworthy returned to his lodgings, he heard Mr. Jones was juſt arrived before him. He hurried therefore inſtantly into an empty chamber, whither he ordered Mr. Jones to be brought to him alone.

It is impoſſible to conceive a more tender or moving ſcene, than the meeting between the uncle and nephew, (for Mrs. Waters, as the reader may well ſuppoſe, had at her laſt viſit diſcovered to him the ſecret of his birth.) The firſt agonies of joy which were felt on both ſides, are indeed beyond my power to deſcribe: I ſhall not therefore attempt it. After Allworthy had raiſed Jones from his feet, where he had proſtrated himſelf, and received him into his arms: O my child, he cried, how have I been to blame! How have I injured you! What amends can I ever make you for thoſe unkind, thoſe unjuſt ſuſpicions which I have entertained; and for all the ſufferings they have occaſioned to you? Am I not now made amends? cries Jones. Would not

my ſufferings, if they had been ten times greater, have been now richly repaid? O my dear uncle! this goodneſs, this tenderneſs over-powers, unmans, deſtroys me. I cannot bear the tranſports which flow ſo faſt upon me. To be again reſtored to your preſence, to your favour; to be once more thus kindly received by my great, my noble, my generous benefactor — Indeed, child, cries Allworthy, I have uſed you cruelly. — He then explained to him all the treachery of Blifil, and again repeated expreſſions of the utmoſt concern, for having been induced by that treachery to uſe him ſo ill. O talk not ſo, anſwered Jones; indeed, Sir, you have uſed me nobly. The wiſeſt man might be deceived as you were, and, under ſuch a deception, the beſt muſt have acted juſt as you did. Your goodneſs diſplayed itſelf in the midſt of your anger, juſt as it then ſeemed. I owe every thing to that goodneſs of which I have been moſt unworthy. Do not put me on ſelf-accuſation, by carrying your generous ſentiments too far. Alas, Sir, I have not been puniſhed more than I have deſerved; and it ſhall be the whole buſineſs of my future life to deſerve that happineſs you now beſtow on me; for believe me, my dear uncle, my puniſhment hath not been thrown away upon me: though I have been a great, I am not a hardened ſinner; I thank heaven I have had time to reflect on my paſt life, where, though I cannot charge myſelf with any groſs villainy,

yet I can diſcern follies and vices more than enough to repent and to be aſhamed of: follies which have been attended with dreadful conſequences to myſelf, and have brought me to the brink of deſtruction. I am rejoiced, my dear child, anſwered Allworthy, to hear you talk thus ſenſibly; for as I am convinced hypocriſy (good heaven! how have I been impoſed on by it in others!) was never among your faults; ſo I can readily believe all you ſay. You now ſee, Tom, to what dangers imprudence alone may ſubject virtue (for virtue, I am now convinced, you love in a great degree.) Prudence is indeed the duty which we owe to ourſelves; and if we will be ſo much our own enemies as to neglect it, we are not to wonder if the world is deficient in diſcharging their duty to us; for when a man lays the foundation of his own ruin, others will, I am afraid, be too apt to build upon it. You ſay, however, you have ſeen your errors, and will reform them. I firmly believe you, my dear child; and therefore, from this moment, you ſhall never more be reminded of them by me. Remember them only yourſelf ſo far, as for the future to teach you the better to avoid them; but ſtill remember, for your comfort, that there is this great difference between thoſe faults which candour may conſtrue into imprudence, and thoſe which can be deduced from villainy only. The former, perhaps, are even more apt to ſubject a man to ruin; but if he reform, his character will, at length, be totally

retrieved; the world, though not immediately, will in time be reconciled to him; and he may reflect, not without ſome mixture of pleaſure, on the dangers he hath eſcaped; but villainy, my boy, when once diſcovered, is irretrievable; the ſtains which this leaves behind, no time will waſh away. The cenſures of mankind will purſue the wretch, their ſcorn will abaſh him in public; and if ſhame drives him into retirement, he will go to it with all thoſe terrors with which a weary child, who is afraid of hobgoblins, retreats from company to go to bed alone. Here his murdered conſcience will haunt him. Repoſe, like a falſe friend, will fly from him. Where-ever he turns his eyes, horror preſents itſelf; if he looks backward, unavailable repentance treads on his heels; if forward, incurable deſpair ſtares him in the face; till, like a condemned priſoner confined in a dungeon, he deteſts his preſent condition, and yet dreads the conſequence of that hour which is to relieve him from it. Comfort yourſelf, I ſay, my child, that this is not your caſe; and rejoice, with thankfulneſs, to him who hath ſuffered you to ſee your errors, before they have brought on you that deſtruction, to which a perſiſtance in even thoſe errors muſt have led you. You have deſerted them; and the proſpect now before you is ſuch, that happineſs ſeems in your own power. — At theſe words Jones fetched a deep ſigh; upon which when Allworthy remonſtrated, he ſaid: Sir, I will

conceal nothing from you; I fear there is one conſequence of my vices I ſhall never be able to retrieve. O my dear uncle, I have loſt a treaſure —— You need ſay no more, anſwered Allworthy; I will be explicit with you; I know what you lament; I have ſeen the young lady, and have diſcourſed with her concerning you. This I muſt inſiſt on, as an earneſt of your ſincerity in all you have ſaid, and of the ſtedfaſtneſs of your reſolution, that you obey me in one inſtance: to abide entirely by the determination of the young lady, whether it ſhall be in your favour, or no. She hath already ſuffered enough from ſolicitations which I hate to think of; ſhe ſhall owe no further conſtraint to my family: I know her father will be as ready to torment her now on your account, as he hath formerly been on another's; but I am determined ſhe ſhall ſuffer no more confinement, no more violence, no more uneaſy hours. — O my dear uncle, anſwered Jones, lay, I beſeech you, ſome command on me, in which I ſhall have ſome merit in obedience. Believe me, Sir, the only inſtance in which I could diſobey you, would be to give an uneaſy moment to my Sophia. No, Sir, if I am ſo miſerable to have incurred her diſpleaſure beyond all hope of forgiveneſs, that alone, with the dreadful reflection of cauſing her miſery, will be ſufficient to overpower me. To call Sophia mine is the greateſt, and now the only additional bleſſing which heaven can beſtow;

but it is a bleſſing which I muſt owe to her alone. I will not flatter you, child, cries Allworthy; I fear your caſe is deſperate: I never ſaw ſtronger marks of an unalterable reſolution in any perſon, than appeared in her vehement declarations againſt receiving your addreſſes; for which, perhaps, you can account better than myſelf. — Oh, Sir! I can account too well, anſwered Jones; I have ſinned againſt her beyond all hope of pardon; and guilty as I am, my guilt unfortunately appears to her in ten times blacker than the real colours. O my dear uncle, I find my follies are irretrievable; and all your goodneſs cannot ſave me from perdition.

A ſervant now acquainted them, that Mr. Weſtern was below ſtairs; for his eagerneſs to ſee Jones could not wait till the afternoon. Upon which Jones, whoſe eyes were full of tears, begged his uncle to entertain Weſtern a few minutes, till he a little recovered himſelf: to which the good man conſented, and having ordered Mr. Weſtern to be ſhewn into a parlour, went down to him.

Mrs. Miller no ſooner heard that Jones was alone, (for ſhe had not yet ſeen him ſince his releaſe from priſon) than ſhe came eagerly into the room, and advancing towards Jones, wiſhed him heartily joy of his new found uncle, and his happy reconciliation; adding: I wiſh I could give you joy on another account, my dear child; but any thing ſo inexorable I never ſaw.

Jones, with ſome appearance of ſurpriſe, aſked her, what ſhe meant? Why then, ſays ſhe, I have been with your young lady, and have explained all matters to her, as they were told me by my ſon Nightingale. She can have no longer any doubt about the letter, that I am certain; for I told her my ſon Nightingale was ready to take his oath, if ſhe pleaſed, that it was all his own invention, and the letter of his inditing. I told her the very reaſon of ſending the letter ought to recommend you to her the more, as it was all upon her account, and a plain proof, that you was reſolved to quit your profligacy for the future; that you had never been guilty of a ſingle inſtance of infidelity to her, ſince your ſeeing her in town. I am afraid I went too far there; but heaven forgive me: I hope your future behaviour will be my juſtification. I am ſure I have ſaid all I can; but all to no purpoſe. She remains inflexible. She ſays, ſhe had forgiven many faults on account of youth; but expreſſed ſuch deteſtation of the character of a libertine, that ſhe abſolutely ſilenced me. I attempted to excuſe you; but the juſtneſs of her accuſation flew in my face. Upon my honour, ſhe is a lovely woman, and one of the ſweeteſt and moſt ſenſible creatures I ever ſaw. I could have almoſt kiſſed her for one expreſſion ſhe made uſe of. It was a ſentiment worthy of Seneca, or of a biſhop. I once fancied, Madam, ſaid ſhe, I had diſcovered great goodneſs of heart in Mr. Jones; and

and for that I own I had a ſincere eſteem: but an entire profligacy of manners will corrupt the beſt heart in the world; and all which a good-natured libertine can expect, is, that we ſhould mix ſome grains of pity with our contempt and abhorrence. She is an angelic creature, that is the truth on't. — O Mrs. Miller, anſwered Jones, can I bear to think I have loſt ſuch an angel! Loſt! no, cries Mrs. Miller; I hope you have not loſt her yet. Reſolve to leave ſuch vicious courſes, and you may yet have hopes: nay, if ſhe ſhould remain inexorable, there is another young lady, a ſweet pretty young lady, and a ſwinging fortune, who is abſolutely dying for love of you. I heard of it this very morning, and I told it to Miſs Weſtern; nay, I went a little beyond the truth again; for I told her you had refuſed her; but indeed I knew you would refuſe her. — And here I muſt give you a little comfort: when I mentioned the young lady's name, who is no other than the pretty widow Hunt, I thought ſhe turned pale; but when I ſaid you had refuſed her, I will be ſworn her face was all over ſcarlet in an inſtant; and theſe were her very words: I will not deny but that I believe he has ſome affection for me.

Here the converſation was interrupted by the arrival of Weſtern, who could no longer be kept out of the room even by the authority of Allworthy himſelf; though this, as we have often ſeen, had a wonderful power over him.

Weſtern immediately went up to Jones, crying out: My old friend Tom, I am glad to ſee thee with all my heart. All paſt muſt be forgotten. I could not intend any affront to thee, becauſe, as Allworthy here knows, nay, doſt know it thyſelf, I took thee for another perſon; and where a body means no harm, what ſignifies a haſty word or two? One chriſtian muſt forget and forgive another. I hope, Sir, ſaid Jones, I ſhall never forget the many obligations I have had to you; but as for any offence towards me, I declare I am an utter ſtranger. — A't, ſays Weſtern, then gee me thy fiſt; a't as hearty an honeſt cock as any in the kingdom. Come along with me; I'll carry thee to thy miſtreſs this moment. Here Allworthy interpoſed; and the 'ſquire being unable to prevail either with the uncle or nephew, was, after ſome litigation, obliged to conſent to delay introducing Jones to Sophia, till the afternoon; at which time Allworthy, as well in compaſſion to Jones, as in compliance with the eager deſires of Weſtern, was prevailed upon to promiſe to attend at the tea-table.

The converſation which now enſued was pleaſant enough; and with which, had it happened earlier in our hiſtory, we would have entertained our reader; but as we have now leiſure only to attend to what is very material, it ſhall ſuffice to ſay, that matters being entirely adjuſted as to the afternoon viſit, Mr. Weſtern again returned home.

CHAP. XI.

The hiſtory draws nearer to a concluſion.

WHEN Mr. Weſtern was departed, Jones began to inform Mr. Allworthy and Mrs. Miller, that his liberty had been procured by two noble lords, who, together with two ſurgeons, and a friend of Mr. Nightingale's, had attended the magiſtrate by whom he had been committed, and by whom, on the ſurgeon's oath, that the wounded perſon was out of all manner of danger from his wound, he was diſcharged.

One only of theſe lords, he ſaid, he had ever ſeen before, and that no more than once; but the other had greatly ſurpriſed him, by aſking his pardon for an offence he had been guilty of towards him, occaſioned, he ſaid, entirely by his ignorance who he was.

Now the reality of the caſe, with which Jones was not acquainted till afterwards, was this. The lieutenant whom lord Fellamar had employed, according to the advice of lady Bellaſton, to preſs Jones, as a vagabond, into the ſea-ſervice, when he came to report to his lordſhip the event which we have before ſeen, ſpoke very favourably of the behaviour of Mr. Jones on all accounts, and ſtrongly

aſſured that lord, that he muſt have miſtaken the perſon; for that Jones was certainly a gentleman; inſomuch that his lordſhip, who was ſtrictly a man of honour, and would by no means have been guilty of an action which the world in general would have condemned, began to be much concerned for the advice which he had taken.

Within a day or two after this, lord Fellamar happened to dine with the Iriſh peer, who, in a converſation upon the duel, acquainted his company with the character of Fitzpatrick; to which indeed he did not do ſtrict juſtice, eſpecially in what related to his lady. He ſaid, ſhe was the moſt innocent, and moſt injured woman alive, and that from compaſſion alone he had undertaken her cauſe. He then declared an intention of going the next morning to Fitzpatrick's lodgings, in order to prevail with him, if poſſible, to conſent to a ſeparation from his wife, who, the peer ſaid, was in apprehenſions for her life, if ſhe ſhould ever return to be under the power of her huſband. Lord Fellamar agreed to go with him, that he might ſatisfy himſelf more concerning Jones, and the circumſtances of the duel; for he was by no means eaſy concerning the part he had acted. The moment his lordſhip gave a hint of his readineſs to aſſiſt in the delivery of the lady, it was eagerly embraced by the other nobleman, who depended much on the authority of lord Fellamar, as he thought it would greatly contribute

to awe Fitzpatrick into a compliance; and perhaps he was in the right; for the poor Iriſhman no ſooner ſaw theſe noble peers had undertaken the cauſe of his wife, than he ſubmitted, and articles of ſeparation were ſoon drawn up, and ſigned between the parties.

Fitzpatrick had been ſo well ſatisfied by Mrs. Waters concerning the innocence of his wife with Jones at Upton, or perhaps from ſome other reaſons, was now become ſo indifferent to that matter, that he ſpoke highly in favour of Jones to lord Fellamar, took all the blame upon himſelf, and ſaid the other had behaved very much like a gentleman, and a man of honour; and upon that lord's further enquiry concerning Mr. Jones, Fitzpatrick told him he was nephew to a gentleman of very great faſhion and fortune, which was the account he had juſt received from Mrs. Waters, after her interview with Dowling.

Lord Fellamar now thought it behoved him to do every thing in his power to make ſatisfaction to a gentleman whom he had ſo groſsly injured, and without any conſideration of rivalſhip, (for he had now given over all thoughts of Sophia) determined to procure Mr. Jones's liberty, being ſatisfied, as well from Fitzpatrick as his ſurgeon, that the wound was not mortal. He, therefore, prevailed with the Iriſh peer to accompany him to the place where Jones was confined, to whom he behaved as we have already related.

When Allworthy returned to his lodgings, he immediately carried Jones into his room, and then acquainted him with the whole matter, as well what he had heard from Mrs. Waters, as what he had diſcovered from Mr. Dowling.

Jones expreſſed great aſtoniſhment, and no leſs concern at this account; but without making any comment or obſervation upon it. And now a meſſage was brought from Mr. Blifil, deſiring to know if his uncle was at leiſure, that he might wait upon him. Allworthy ſtarted, and turned pale, and then in a more paſſionate tone than I believe he had ever uſed before, bid the ſervant tell Blifil, he knew him not. Conſider, dear Sir, — cries Jones, in a trembling voice. — I have conſidered, anſwered Allworthy, and you yourſelf ſhall carry my meſſage to the villain. — No one can carry him the ſentence of his own ruin ſo properly, as the man whoſe ruin he hath ſo villainouſly contrived. — Pardon me, dear Sir, ſaid Jones; a moment's reflection will, I am ſure, convince you of the contrary. What might perhaps be but juſtice from another tongue, would from mine be inſult. And to whom? — My own brother, and your nephew. — Nor did he uſe me ſo barbarouſly. — Indeed that would have been more inexcuſable than any thing he hath done. Fortune may tempt men of no very bad diſpoſitions to injuſtice; but inſults proceed only from black and rancorous minds, and have no

temptations to excuſe them. —— Let me beſeech you, Sir, to do nothing by him in the preſent height of your anger. Conſider, my dear uncle, I was not myſelf condemned unheard. Allworthy ſtood ſilent a moment, and then embracing Jones, he ſaid with tears guſhing from his eyes: O my child! to what goodneſs have I been ſo long blind!

Mrs. Miller entering the room at that moment, after a gentle rap, which was not perceived, and ſeeing Jones in the arms of his uncle, the poor woman, in an agony of joy, fell upon her knees, and burſt forth into the moſt ecſtatic thankſgivings to heaven, for what had happened. — Then running to Jones, ſhe embraced him eagerly, crying: My deareſt friend, I wiſh you joy a thouſand and a thouſand times of this bleſt day; and next Mr. Allworthy himſelf received the ſame congratulations. To which he anſwered: Indeed, indeed, Mrs. Miller, I am beyond expreſſion happy. Some few more raptures having paſſed on all ſides, Mrs. Miller deſired them both to walk down to dinner in the parlour, where ſhe ſaid there were a very happy ſet of people aſſembled; being indeed no other than Nightingale and his bride, and his couſin Harris with her bridegroom.

Allworthy excuſed himſelf from dining with the company, ſaying, he had ordered ſome little things for him and his nephew in his own apartment; for that they had much private buſineſs to diſcourſe of,

but would not reſiſt promiſing the good woman, that both he and Jones would make part of her ſociety at ſupper.

Mrs. Miller then aſked what was to be done with Blifil? for indeed, ſays ſhe, I cannot be eaſy while ſuch a villain is in my houſe. — Allworthy anſwered, he was as uneaſy as herſelf on the ſame account. O! cries ſhe, if that be the caſe, leave the matter to me; I'll ſoon ſhew him the outſide of my doors, I warrant you. Here are two or three luſty fellows below ſtairs. There will be no need of any violence, cries Allworthy; if you will carry him a meſſage from me, he will, I am convinced, depart of his own accord. Will I? ſaid Mrs. Miller, I never did any thing in my life with a better will. Here Jones interfered, and ſaid, he had conſidered the matter better, and would, if Mr. Allworthy pleaſed, be himſelf the meſſenger. I know, ſays he, already enough of your pleaſure, Sir, and I beg leave to acquaint him with it by my own words. Let me beſeech you, Sir, added he, to reflect on the dreadful conſequences of driving him to violent and ſudden deſpair. How unfit, alas! is this poor man to die in his preſent ſituation. This ſuggeſtion had not the leaſt effect on Mrs. Miller. She left the room, crying: You are too good, Mr. Jones, infinitely too good to live in this world. But it made a deeper impreſſion on Allworthy. My good child, ſaid he, I am equally aſtoniſhed at the goodneſs

of your heart, and the quickneſs of your underſtanding. Heaven indeed forbid that this wretch ſhould be deprived of any means or time for repentance. That would be a ſhocking conſideration indeed. Go to him, therefore, and uſe your own diſcretion; yet do not flatter him with any hopes of my forgiveneſs; for I ſhall never forgive villainy farther than my religion obliges me, and that extends not either to our bounty or our converſation.

Jones went up to Blifil's room, whom he found in a ſituation which moved his pity, though it would have raiſed a leſs amiable paſſion in many beholders. He caſt himſelf on his bed, where he lay abandoning himſelf to deſpair, and drowned in tears; not in ſuch tears as flow from contrition, and waſh away guilt from minds which have been ſeduced or ſurpriſed into it unawares, againſt the bent of their natural diſpoſitions, as will ſometimes happen from human frailty, even to the good; no, theſe tears were ſuch as the frighted thief ſheds in his cart, and are indeed the effects of that concern which the moſt ſavage natures are ſeldom deficient in feeling for themſelves.

It would be unpleaſant and tedious to paint this ſcene in full length. Let it ſuffice to ſay, that the behaviour of Jones was kind to exceſs. He omitted nothing which his invention could ſupply, to raiſe and comfort the drooping ſpirits of Blifil, before he communicated to him the reſolution of his uncle,

that he muſt quit the houſe that evening. He offered to furniſh him with any money he wanted, aſſured him of his hearty forgiveneſs of all he had done againſt him, that he would endeavour to live with him hereafter as a brother, and would leave nothing unattempted to effectuate a reconciliation with his uncle.

Blifil was at firſt ſullen and ſilent, balancing in his mind whether he ſhould yet deny all: but finding at laſt the evidence too ſtrong againſt him, he betook himſelf at laſt to confeſſion. He then aſked pardon of his brother in the moſt vehement manner, proſtrated himſelf on the ground, and kiſſed his feet; in ſhort, he was now as remarkably mean, as he had been remarkably wicked.

Jones could not ſo far check his diſdain, but that it a little diſcovered itſelf in his countenance at this extreme ſervility. He raiſed his brother the moment he could from the ground, and adviſed him to bear his afflictions more like a man; repeating at the ſame time his promiſes, that he would do all in his power to leſſen them: for which Blifil making many profeſſions of his unworthineſs, poured forth a profuſion of thanks: and then he having declared, he would immediately depart to another lodging, Jones returned to his uncle.

Among other matters, Allworthy now acquainted Jones with the diſcovery which he made concerning the 500 l. bank-notes. I have, ſaid he, already

conſulted a lawyer, who tells me, to my great aſtoniſhment, that there is no puniſhment for a fraud of this kind. Indeed, when I conſider the black ingratitude of this fellow toward you, I think a highwayman, compared to him, is an innocent perſon.

Good heaven! ſays Jones, is it poſſible? — I am ſhocked beyond meaſure at this news. I thought there was not an honeſter fellow in the world. — The temptation of ſuch a ſum was too great for him to withſtand; for ſmaller matters have come ſafe to me through his hand. Indeed, my dear uncle, you muſt ſuffer me to call it weakneſs rather than ingratitude; for I am convinced the poor fellow loves me, and hath done me ſome kindneſſes, which I can never forget; nay, I believe he hath repented of this very act; for it is not above a day or two ago, when my affairs ſeemed in a moſt deſperate ſituation, that he viſited me in my confinement, and offered me any money I wanted. Conſider, Sir, what a temptation to a man who hath taſted ſuch bitter diſtreſs, it muſt be to have a ſum in his poſſeſſion, which muſt put him and his family beyond any future poſſibility of ſuffering the like.

Child, cries Allworthy, you carry this forgiving temper too far. Such miſtaken mercy is not only weakneſs, but borders on injuſtice, and is pernicious to ſociety, as it encourages vice. The diſhoneſty of this fellow I might perhaps have pardoned, but

never his ingratitude. And give me leave to ſay, when we ſuffer any temptation to atone for diſhoneſty itſelf, we are as candid and merciful as we ought to be; and ſo far I confeſs I have gone; for I have often pitied the fate of a highwayman, when I have been on the grand jury; and have more than once applied to the judge on the behalf of ſuch as have had any mitigating circumſtances in their caſe: but when diſhoneſty is attended with any blacker crime, ſuch as cruelty, murder, ingratitude, or the like, compaſſion and forgiveneſs then become faults. I am convinced the fellow is a villain, and he ſhall be puniſhed; at leaſt as far as I can puniſh him.

This was ſpoke with ſo ſtern a voice, that Jones did not think proper to make any reply: beſides, the hour appointed by Mr. Weſtern now drew ſo near, that he had barely time left to dreſs himſelf. Here, therefore, ended the preſent dialogue, and Jones retired to another room, where Partridge attended, according to order, with his clothes.

Partridge had ſcarce ſeen his maſter ſince the happy diſcovery. The poor fellow was unable either to contain or expreſs his tranſports. He behaved like one frantic, and made almoſt as many miſtakes while he was dreſſing Jones, as I have ſeen made by Harlequin in dreſſing himſelf on the ſtage.

His memory, however, was not in the leaſt deficient. He recollected now many omens and preſages of this happy event, ſome of which he had remarked

at the time, but many more he now remembered; nor did he omit the dreams he had dreamt the evening before his meeting with Jones; and concluded with ſaying: I always told your honour ſomething boded in my mind, that you would one time or other have it in your power to make my fortune. Jones aſſured him that this boding ſhould as certainly be verified with regard to him, as all the other omens had been to himſelf; which did not a little add to all the raptures which the poor fellow had already conceived on account of his maſter.

CHAP. XII.

Approaching ſtill nearer to the end.

JONES being now compleatly dreſſed, attended his uncle to Mr. Weſtern's. He was indeed one of the fineſt figures ever beheld, and his perſon alone would have charmed the greater part of womankind; but we hope it hath already appeared in this hiſtory, that nature, when ſhe formed him, did not totally rely, as ſhe ſometimes doth, on this merit only, to recommend her work.

Sophia, who, angry as ſhe was, was likewiſe ſet forth to the beſt advantage, for which I leave my female readers to account, appeared ſo extremely beautiful, that even Allworthy, when he ſaw her,

could not forbear whiſpering Weſtern, that he believed ſhe was the fineſt creature in the world. To which Weſtern anſwered, in a whiſper overheard by all preſent: So much the better for Tom; — for d — n me if he ſhan't ha the touſling her. Sophia was all over ſcarlet at theſe words, while Tom's countenance was altogether as pale, and he was almoſt ready to ſink from his chair.

The tea-table was ſcarce removed, before Weſtern lugged Allworthy out of the room, telling him, he had buſineſs of conſequence to impart, and muſt ſpeak to him that inſtant in private before he forgot it.

The lovers were now alone, and it will, I queſtion not, appear ſtrange to many readers, that thoſe who had ſo much to ſay to one another, when danger and difficulty attended their converſation; and who ſeemed ſo eager to ruſh into each other's arms, when ſo many bars lay in their way, now that with ſafety they were at liberty to ſay or do whatever they pleaſed, ſhould both remain for ſome time ſilent and motionleſs; inſomuch that a ſtranger of moderate ſagacity might have well concluded, they were mutually indifferent: but ſo it was, however ſtrange it may ſeem; both ſat with their eyes caſt downwards on the ground, and for ſome minutes continued in perfect ſilence.

Mr. Jones, during this interval, attempted once or twice to ſpeak, but was abſolutely incapable, muttering only, or rather ſighing out, ſome broken

words; when Sophia at length, partly out of pity to him, and partly to turn the diſcourſe from the ſubject which ſhe knew well enough he was endeavouring to open, ſaid: —

Sure, Sir, you are the moſt fortunate man in the world in this diſcovery. And can you really, Madam, think me ſo fortunate, ſaid Jones, ſighing, while I have incurred your diſpleaſure? — Nay, Sir, ſays ſhe, as to that, you beſt know whether you have deſerved it. Indeed, Madam, anſwered he, you yourſelf are as well apprized of all my demerits. Mrs. Miller has acquainted you with the whole truth. O! my Sophia, am I never to hope for forgiveneſs? — I think, Mr. Jones, ſaid ſhe, I may almoſt depend on your own juſtice, and leave it to yourſelf to paſs ſentence on your own conduct. — Alas! Madam, anſwered he, it is mercy and not juſtice, which I implore at your hands. Juſtice I know muſt condemn me — yet not for the letter I ſent to lady Bellaſton. Of that I moſt ſolemnly declare, you have had a true account. He then inſiſted much on the ſecurity given him by Nightingale, of a fair pretence for breaking off, if, contrary to their expectations, her ladyſhip ſhould have accepted his offer; but confeſt, that he had been guilty of a great indiſcretion, to put ſuch a letter as that into her power, which, ſaid he, I have dearly paid for, in the effect it has upon you. I do not, I cannot, ſays ſhe, believe otherwiſe of that letter than you would have me. My conduct,

I think, ſhews you clearly I do not believe there is much in that. And yet, Mr. Jones, have I not enough to reſent? After what paſt at Upton, ſo ſoon to engage in a new amour with another woman, while I fancied, and you pretended, your heart was bleeding for me! — Indeed you have acted ſtrangely. Can I believe the paſſion you have profeſt to me to be ſincere? Or if I can, what happineſs can I aſſure myſelf of with a man capable of ſo much inconſtancy? O! my Sophia, cries he, do not doubt the ſincerity of the pureſt paſſion that ever inflamed a human breaſt. Think, moſt adorable creature, of my unhappy ſituation, of my deſpair. — Could I, my Sophia, have flattered myſelf with the moſt diſtant hopes of being ever permitted to throw myſelf at your feet, in the manner I do now, it would not have been in the power of any other woman to have inſpired a thought which the ſevereſt chaſtity could have condemned. Inconſtancy to you! O Sophia! if you can have goodneſs enough to pardon what is paſt, do not let any cruel future apprehenſions ſhut your mercy againſt me. — No repentance was ever more ſincere. O! let it reconcile me to my heaven in this dear boſom. Sincere repentance, Mr. Jones, anſwered ſhe, will obtain the pardon of a ſinner, but it is from one who is a perfect judge of that ſincerity. A human mind may be impoſed on; nor is there any infallible method to prevent it. You muſt expect, however, that if I can be prevailed on

on by your repentance to pardon you, I will at leaſt inſiſt on the ſtrongeſt proof of its ſincerity. — O! name any proof in my power, anſwered Jones eagerly. Time, replied ſhe; time alone, Mr. Jones, can convince me that you are a true penitent, and have reſolved to abandon theſe vicious courſes, which I ſhould deteſt you for, if I imagined you capable of perſevering in them. Do not imagine it, cries Jones. On my knees I entreat, I implore your confidence, a confidence which it ſhall be the buſineſs of my life to deſerve. Let it then, ſaid ſhe, be the buſineſs of ſome part of your life to ſhew me you deſerve it. I think I have been explicit enough in aſſuring you, that when I ſee you merit my confidence, you will obtain it. After what is paſt, Sir, can you expect I ſhould take you upon your word?

He replied: Don't believe me upon my word; I have a better ſecurity, a pledge for my conſtancy, which it is impoſſible to ſee and to doubt. What is that? ſaid Sophia, a little ſurpriſed. I will ſhew you, my charming angel, cried Jones, ſeizing her hand, and carrying her to the glaſs. There, behold it there in that lovely figure, in that face, that ſhape, thoſe eyes, that mind which ſhines through thoſe eyes: can the man who ſhall be in poſſeſſion of theſe be inconſtant? Impoſſible! my Sophia: they would fix a Dorimant, a lord Rocheſter. You could not doubt it, if you could ſee yourſelf with any eyes but your own. Sophia bluſhed, and half ſmiled; but forcing

again her brow into a frown: If I am to judge, ſaid ſhe, of the future by the paſt, my image will no more remain in your heart when I am out of your ſight, than it will in this glaſs when I am out of the room. By heaven, by all that is ſacred, ſaid Jones, it never was out of my heart. The delicacy of your ſex cannot conceive the groſſneſs of ours, nor how little one ſort of amour has to do with the heart. I will never marry a man, replied Sophia, very gravely, who ſhall not learn refinement enough to be as incapable as I am myſelf of making ſuch a diſtinction. I will learn it, ſaid Jones. I have learnt it already. The firſt moment of hope that my Sophia might be my wife, taught it me at once; and all the reſt of her ſex from that moment became as little the objects of deſire to my ſenſe, as of paſſion to my heart. Well, ſaid Sophia, the proof of this muſt be from time. Your ſituation, Mr. Jones, is now altered, and I aſſure you I have great ſatisfaction in the alteration. You will now want no opportunity of being near me, and convincing me that your mind is altered too. O! my angel, cries Jones, how ſhall I thank thy goodneſs? And are you ſo good to own, that you have a ſatisfaction in my proſperity? — Believe me, believe me, Madam, it is you alone have given a reliſh to that proſperity, ſince I owe to it the dear hope — O! my Sophia, let it not be a diſtant one. — I will be all obedience to your commands. I will not dare to preſs any

thing further than you permit me. Yet let me intreat you to appoint a ſhort trial. O! tell me, when I may expect you will be convinced of what is moſt ſolemnly true. When I have gone voluntarily thus far, Mr. Jones, ſaid ſhe, I expect not to be preſſed. Nay, I will not. — O don't look ſo unkindly thus, my Sophia, cries he. I do not, I dare not preſs you. — Yet permit me at leaſt once more to beg you would fix the period. O! conſider the impatience of love. — A twelve-month, perhaps, ſaid ſhe. O! my Sophia, cries he, you have named an eternity. — Perhaps it may be ſomething ſooner, ſays ſhe; I will not be teazed. If your paſſion for me be what I would have it, I think you may now be eaſy. — Eaſy, Sophia! call not ſuch exulting happineſs as mine by ſo cold a name. — O! tranſporting thought! am I not aſſured that the bleſſed day will come, when I ſhall call you mine; when fears ſhall be no more; when I ſhall have that dear, that vaſt, that exquiſite, ecſtatic delight of making my Sophia happy? — Indeed, Sir, ſaid ſhe, that day is in your own power. — O! my dear, my divine angel, cried he, theſe words have made me mad with joy. — But I muſt, I will thank thoſe dear lips which have ſo ſweetly pronounced my bliſs. He then caught her in his arms, and kiſſed her with an ardour he had never ventured before.

At this inſtant, Weſtern, who had ſtood ſome time liſtening, burſt into the room, and with his

hunting voice and phraſe, cried out: To her, boy, to her, go to her. — That's it, little honeys, O! that's it. Well, what is it all over? Hath ſhe appointed the day, boy? What ſhall it be to morrow or next day? I ſhan't be put off a minute longer than next day, I am reſolved. Let me beſeech you, ſays Jones, don't let me be the occaſion — Beſeech mine a —, cries Weſtern, I thought thou had'ſt been a lad of higher mettle, than to gee way to a parcel of maideniſh tricks. — I tell thee it is all a flimflam. Zoodikers! ſhe'd ha the wedding to night with all her heart. Would'ſt not Sophy? Come, confeſs, and be an honeſt girl for once. What, art dumb? Why doſt not ſpeak? — Why ſhould I confeſs, Sir, ſays Sophia, ſince it ſeems you are ſo well acquainted with my thoughts? — That's a good girl, cries he, and doſt conſent then? No, indeed, Sir, ſays Sophia, I have given no ſuch conſent. — And wunt nut ha un then to-morrow, nor next day? ſays Weſtern. — Indeed, Sir, ſays ſhe, I have no ſuch intention. But I can tell thee, replied he, why haſt nut; only becauſe thou doſt love to be deſobedient, and to plague and vex thy vather. Pray, Sir, ſaid Jones, interfering — I tell thee thou art a puppy, cries he. When I forbid her, then it was all nothing but ſighing and whining, and languiſhing, and writing; now I am vor thee, ſhe is againſt thee. All the ſpirit of contrary, that's all. She is above being guided and governed by her vather, that is the whole truth on't.

It is only to diſoblige and contradict me. What would my papa have me do? cries Sophia. What would I ha thee do? ſays he, why gee un thy hand this moment. — Well, Sir, ſaid Sophia; I will obey you. — There is my hand, Mr. Jones. Well, and will you conſent to ha un to-morrow morning? ſays Weſtern. — I will be obedient to you, Sir, cries ſhe. — Why then to-morrow morning be the day, cries he. — Why then to-morrow morning ſhall be the day, papa, ſince you will have it ſo, ſays Sophia. Jones then fell upon his knees, and kiſſed her hand in an agony of joy, while Weſtern began to caper and dance about the room, preſently crying out: — Where the devil is Allworthy? He is without now, a talking with that d — n'd lawyer Dowling, when he ſhould be minding other matters. He then ſallied out in queſt of him, and very opportunely left the lovers to enjoy a few tender minutes alone.

But he ſoon returned with Allworthy, ſaying: If you won't believe me, you may aſk her yourſelf. Haſt nut gin thy conſent, Sophy, to be married to-morrow? Such are your commands, Sir, cries Sophia, and I dare not be guilty of diſobedience. I hope, Madam, cries Allworthy, my nephew will merit ſo much goodneſs, and will be always as ſenſible as myſelf, of the great honour you have done my family. An alliance with ſo charming and ſo excellent a young lady would indeed be an honour to the greateſt

in England. Yes, cries Weſtern, but if I had ſuffered her to ſtand ſhill I ſhall I, dilly dally, you might not ha had that honour yet a while; I was forced to uſe a little vatherly authority to bring her to. I hope not, Sir, cries Allworthy. I hope there is not the leaſt conſtraint. Why, there, cries Weſtern, you may bid her unſay all again, if you will. Do'ſt repent heartily of thy promiſe, do'ſt not, Sophy? Indeed, papa, cries ſhe, I do not repent, nor do I believe I ever ſhall, of any promiſe in favour of Mr. Jones. Then, nephew, cries Allworthy, I felicitate you moſt heartily; for I think you are the happieſt of men. And, Madam, you will give me leave to congratulate you on this joyful occaſion: indeed I am convinced you have beſtowed yourſelf on one who will be ſenſible of your merit, and who will at leaſt uſe his beſt endeavours to deſerve it. His beſt endeavours! cries Weſtern, that he will, I warrant un. — Harkee, Allworthy, I'll bet thee five pound to a crown we ha a boy to-morrow nine months: but prithee tell me what wut ha! Wut ha Burgundy, Champaigne, or what? for pleaſe Jupiter, we'll make a night on't. Indeed, Sir, ſaid Allworthy, you muſt excuſe me; both my nephew and I were engaged, before I ſuſpected this near approach of his happineſs. — Engaged! quoth the 'ſquire, never tell me. — I won't part with thee to-night upon any occaſion. Shalt ſup here, pleaſe the lord Harry. You muſt pardon me, my dear

neighbour, anſwered Allworthy; I have given a ſolemn promiſe, and that you know I never break. Why, prithee, who art engaged to? cries the 'ſquire. — Allworthy then informed him, as likewiſe of the company. — Odzookers! anſwered the 'ſquire, I will go with thee, and ſo ſhall Sophy; for I won't part with thee to-night; and it would be barbarous to part Tom and the girl. This offer was preſently embraced by Allworthy; and Sophia conſented, having firſt obtained a private promiſe from her father, that he would not mention a ſyllable concerning her marriage.

CHAP. XIII.

In which the hiſtory is concluded.

YOUNG Nightingale had been that afternoon, by appointment, to wait on his father, who received him much more kindly than he expected. There likewiſe he met his uncle, who was returned to town in queſt of his new married daughter.

This marriage was the luckieſt incident which could have happened to the young gentleman; for theſe brothers lived in a conſtant ſtate of contention about the government of their children, both heartily deſpiſing the method which each other took. Each of them, therefore, now endeavoured as much as

he could, to palliate the offence which his own child had committed, and to aggravate the match of the other. This deſire of triumphing over his brother, added to the many arguments which Allworthy had uſed, ſo ſtrongly operated on the old gentleman, that he met his ſon with a ſmiling countenance, and actually agreed to ſup with him that evening at Mrs. Miller's.

As for the other, who really loved his daughter with the moſt immoderate affection, there was little difficulty in inclining him to a reconciliation. He was no ſooner informed by his nephew, where his daughter and her huſband were, than he declared he would inſtantly go to her. And when he arrived there, he ſcarce ſuffered her to fall upon her knees, before he took her up, and embraced her with a tenderneſs which affected all who ſaw him; and in leſs than a quarter of an hour was as well reconciled to both her and her huſband, as if he had himſelf joined their hands.

In this ſituation were affairs, when Mr. Allworthy and his company arrived to complete the happineſs of Mrs. Miller, who no ſooner ſaw Sophia, than ſhe gueſſed every thing that had happened; and ſo great was her friendſhip to Jones, that it added not a few tranſports to thoſe ſhe felt on the happineſs of her own daughter.

There have not, I believe, been many inſtances of a number of people met together, where every

one was ſo perfectly happy, as in this company. Amongſt whom the father of young Nightingale enjoyed the leaſt perfect content; for notwithſtanding his affection for his ſon; notwithſtanding the authority and the arguments of Allworthy, together with the other motive mentioned before, he could not ſo entirely be ſatisfied with his ſon's choice; and perhaps the preſence of Sophia herſelf tended a little to aggravate and heighten his concern, as a thought now and then ſuggeſted itſelf, that his ſon might have had that lady, or ſome ſuch other. Not that any of the charms which adorned either the perſon or mind of Sophia, created the uneaſineſs: it was the contents of her father's coffers which ſet his heart a longing. Theſe were the charms which he could not bear to think his ſon had ſacrificed to the daughter of Mrs. Miller.

The brides were both very pretty women; but ſo totally were they eclipſed by the beauty of Sophia, that had they not been two of the beſt-tempered girls in the world, it would have raiſed ſome envy in their breaſts; for neither of their huſbands could long keep his eyes from Sophia, who ſat at the table like a queen receiving homage, or rather like a ſuperior being receiving adoration from all around her. But it was an adoration which they gave, not which ſhe exacted: for ſhe was as much diſtinguiſhed by her modeſty and affability, as by all her other perfections.

The evening was ſpent in much true mirth. All were happy, but thoſe the moſt, who had been moſt unhappy before. Their former ſufferings and fears gave ſuch a reliſh to their felicity, as even love and fortune in their fulleſt flow could not have given without the advantage of ſuch a compariſon. Yet as great joy, eſpecially after a ſudden change and revolution of circumſtances, is apt to be ſilent, and dwells rather in the heart than on the tongue, Jones and Sophia appeared the leaſt merry of the whole company. Which Weſtern obſerved with great impatience, often crying out to them: Why do'ſt not talk, boy? Why do'ſt look ſo grave? Haſt loſt thy tongue, girl? Drink another glaſs of wine, ſha't drink another glaſs. And the more to enliven her, he would ſometimes ſing a merry ſong, which bore ſome relation to matrimony, and the loſs of a maidenhead. Nay, he would have proceeded ſo far on that topic, as to have driven her out of the room, if Mr. Allworthy had not checked him ſometimes by looks, and once or twice by a Fie! Mr. Weſtern. He began indeed once to debate the matter, and aſſert his right to talk to his own daughter as he thought fit; but as nobody ſeconded him, he was ſoon reduced to order.

Notwithſtanding this little reſtraint, he was ſo pleaſed with the chearfulneſs and good humour of the company, that he inſiſted on their meeting the next day at his lodgings. They all did ſo; and the

lovely Sophia, who was now in private become a bride too, officiated as the miſtreſs of the ceremonies, or, in the polite phraſe, did the honours of the table. She had that morning given her hand to Jones, in the chapel at Doctors-Commons, where Allworthy, Mr. Weſtern, and Mrs. Miller, were the only perſons preſent.

Sophia had earneſtly deſired her father, that no others of the company, who were that day to dine with him, ſhould be acquainted with her marriage. The ſame ſecrecy was enjoined to Mrs. Miller, and Jones undertook for Allworthy. This ſomewhat reconciled the delicacy of Sophia to the public entertainment, which, in compliance with her father's will, ſhe was obliged to go to, greatly againſt her own inclinations. In confidence of this ſecrecy, ſhe went through the day pretty well, till the 'ſquire, who was now advanced into the ſecond bottle, could contain his joy no longer, but, filling out a bumper, drank a health to the bride. The health was immediately pledged by all preſent, to the great confuſion of our poor bluſhing Sophia, and the great concern of Jones upon her account. To ſay truth, there was not a perſon preſent made wiſer by this diſcovery; for Mrs. Miller had whiſpered it to her daughter, her daughter to her huſband, her huſband to his ſiſter, and ſhe to all the reſt.

Sophia now took the firſt opportunity of withdrawing with the ladies, and the 'ſquire ſat in to his cups,

in which he was, by degrees, deſerted by all the company, except the uncle of young Nightingale, who loved his bottle as well as Weſtern himſelf. Theſe two therefore ſat ſtoutly to it, during the whole evening, and long after that happy hour which had ſurrendered the charming Sophia to the eager arms of her enraptured Jones.

Thus, reader, we have at length brought our hiſtory to a concluſion, in which, to our great pleaſure, though contrary perhaps to thy expectation, Mr. Jones appears to be the happieſt of all human kind: for what happineſs this world affords equal to the poſſeſſion of ſuch a woman as Sophia, I ſincerely own I have never yet diſcovered.

As to the other perſons who have made any conſiderable figure in this hiſtory, as ſome may deſire to know a little more concerning them, we will proceed, in as few words as poſſible, to ſatisfy their curioſity.

Allworthy hath never yet been prevailed upon to ſee Blifil, but he hath yielded to the importunity of Jones, backed by Sophia, to ſettle 200 *l.* a year upon him; to which Jones hath privately added a third. Upon this income he lives in one of the northern counties, about 200 miles diſtant from London, and lays up 200 *l.* a year out of it, in order to purchaſe a ſeat in the next parliament from a neighbouring borough, which he has bargained for with an attorney there. He is alſo lately turned

methodiſt, in hopes of marrying a very rich widow of that ſect, whoſe eſtate lies in that part of the kingdom.

Mr. Square died ſoon after he writ the before-mentioned letter; and as to Thwackum, he continues at his vicarage. He hath made many fruitleſs attempts to regain the confidence of Allworthy, or to ingratiate himſelf with Jones, both of whom he flatters to their faces, and abuſes behind their backs. But in his ſtead, Mr. Allworthy hath lately taken Mr. Abraham Adams into his houſe, of whom Sophia is grown immoderately fond, and declares he ſhall have the tuition of her children.

Mrs. Fitzpatrick is ſeparated from her huſband, and retains the little remains of her fortune. She lives in reputation at the polite end of the town, and is ſo good an œconomiſt, that ſhe ſpends three times the income of her fortune, without running in debt. She maintains a perfect intimacy with the lady of the Iriſh peer; and in acts of friendſhip to her repays all the obligations ſhe owes to her huſband.

Mrs. Weſtern was ſoon reconciled to her niece Sophia, and hath ſpent two months together with her in the country. Lady Bellaſton made the latter a formal viſit at her return to town, where ſhe behaved to Jones as to a perfect ſtranger, and with great civility wiſhed him joy on his marriage.

Mr. Nightingale hath purchaſed an eſtate for his ſon in the neighbourhood of Jones, where the young

gentleman, his lady, Mrs. Miller, and her little daughter reſide, and the moſt agreeable intercourſe ſubſiſts between the two families.

As to thoſe of lower account, Mrs. Waters returned into the country, had a penſion of 60 *l.* a year ſettled upon her by Mr. Allworthy, and is married to parſon Supple, on whom, at the inſtance of Sophia, Weſtern hath beſtowed a conſiderable living.

Black George hearing the diſcovery that had been made, run away, and was never ſince heard of; and Jones beſtowed the money on his family, but not in equal proportions, for Molly had much the greateſt ſhare.

As for Partridge, Jones hath ſettled 50 *l.* a year on him; and he hath again ſet up a ſchool, in which he meets with much better encouragement than formerly; and there is now a treaty of marriage on foot, between him and Miſs Molly Seagrim, which, through the mediation of Sophia, is likely to take effect.

We now return to take leave of Mr. Jones and Sophia, who, within two days after their marriage, attended Mr. Weſtern and Mr. Allworthy into the country. Weſtern hath reſigned his family ſeat, and the greater part of his eſtate to his ſon-in law, and hath retired to a leſſer houſe of his, in another part of the country, which is better for hunting. Indeed he is often as a viſitant with Mr. Jones, who, as well as his daughter, hath an infinite delight in doing

every thing in their power to pleaſe him. And this deſire of theirs is attended with ſuch ſucceſs, that the old gentleman declares, he was never happy in his life till now. He hath here a parlour and anti-chamber to himſelf, where he gets drunk with whom he pleaſes; and his daughter is ſtill as formerly to play to him whenever he deſires it; for Jones hath aſſured her, that as next to pleaſing her, one of his higheſt ſatisfactions is to contribute to the happineſs of the old man; ſo the great duty which ſhe expreſſes and performs to her father renders her almoſt equally dear to him, with the love which ſhe beſtows on himſelf.

Sophia hath already produced him two fine children, a boy and a girl, of whom the old gentleman is ſo fond, that he ſpends much of his time in the nurſery, where he declares, the tattling of his little grand-daughter, who is above a year and a half old, is ſweeter muſic than the fineſt cry of dogs in England.

Allworthy was likewiſe greatly liberal to Jones on the marriage, and hath omitted no inſtance of ſhewing his affection to him and his lady, who loves him as a father. Whatever in the nature of Jones had a tendency to vice, has been corrected by continual converſation with this good man, and by his union with the lovely and virtuous Sophia. He hath alſo, by reflection on his paſt follies, acquired a diſcretion and prudence very uncommon in one of his lively parts.

To conclude, as there are not to be found a worthier man and woman than this fond couple, so neither can any be imagined more happy. They preserve the purest and tendereſt affection for each other, an affection daily increaſed and confirmed by mutual endearments, and mutual eſteem. Nor is their conduct towards their relations and friends leſs amiable, than towards one another. And ſuch is their condeſcenſion, their indulgence, and their beneficence to thoſe below them, that there is not a neighbour, a tenant, or a ſervant, who doth not moſt gratefully bleſs the day when Mr. Jones was married to his Sophia.

THE END.

BRITISH 28FE74 MUSEUM